A

FATHER'S INSTRUCTIONS.

PART THE THIRD.

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AGGREDIAR, NON TAM PERFICIENDI SPE, QUAM EXPERIENDI VOLUNTATE.

CIC. ORAT.

A

FATHER'S INSTRUCTIONS;

ADAPTED TO DIFFERENT PERIODS OF LIFE,

FROM

YOUTH TO MATURITY;

And designed to promote

THE LOVE OF VIRTUE;

A TASTE FOR KNOWLEDGE;

And attentive Observation of

THE WORKS OF NATURE:

BY

THOMAS PERCIVAL, M.D.

F.R.S. AND A.S. LOND. F.R.S. AND R.M.S. EDINB.
&c. &c.

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TO THE MEMORY OF

THE REV. THO. B. PERCIVAL, LL. B.

OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

CHAPLAIN TO THE MARQUIS OF WATERFORD,

AND TO THE BRITISH COMPANY OF MERCHANTS

AT ST. PETERSBURGH,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE MAY 27, 1799,

IN THE THIRTY-SECOND YEAR OF HIS AGE:

AND OF

JAMES PERCIVAL,

OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

WHO DIED FEB. 23, 1793, ÆTAT. TWENTY-FOUR,

A VICTIM TO FEBRILE CONTAGION,

WHILST CULTIVATING THE HIPPOCRATIC ART,

ALAS! WITH TOO ASSIDUOUS ATTENTION,

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH;

THESE OFFICES OF PATERNAL LOVE,

EMPLOYED NOT IN VAIN

TO FOSTER THEIR RISING TALENTS AND VIRTUES,

ARE NOW CONSECRATED,

WITH PIOUS SUBMISSION

TO THE DISPENSATIONS OF PROVIDENCE,

BY

A MOURNING FATHER.

TO THE

AUTHOR'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS.

SINCE I laſt addreſſed you, my dear children, our family circle has been contracted by the death of your two excellent brothers. In deploring their loſs, we become more ſenſible of the warmth, and of the value of our attachment to each other; whilſt mutual ſympathy in ſorrow draws cloſer the bands of mutual amity and love. Dear to us all, inexpreſſibly dear, is their memory: And this tender recollection is an incenſe which may aſcend to heaven. For as we contemplate them, in their ſtate of exaltation, even with augmented affection,

fection, why ſhould we not fondly imagine that they look down upon us with reciprocal endearment; continuing to exerciſe all the generous charities which grew with their growth and ſtrengthened with their ſtrength, and which probably form the conſtituents of virtue and felicity in every ſtage of exiſtence? This pleaſing and conſolatory idea is not without the ſanction of high authority; and may be indulged not only innocently, but profitably, as it tends to elevate our views, to refine our paſſions, and to animate us to become worthy of the friendſhip, and fitted for the intercourſe of the *ſpirits of the juſt made perfect.*

I now preſent you with a farther memorial of my love, and of my unabating ſolicitude to promote your

your intellectual, moral, and religious improvement. This continuation of A Father's Inſtructions is adapted, I truſt, to the maturity in years and knowledge which moſt of you have attained. It comprehends not the leſſons of authority, but the communications of friendſhip, or recitals of what we have frequently diſcuſſed together: And the work will be received by you, I am fully perſuaded, with the moſt indulgent partiality. To the God of love and peace I commend you; fervently praying that he will continue to us on earth the bleſſings of domeſtic harmony; and hereafter unite us, with thoſe who are gone before, as one family in heaven, for ever and for ever! Farewell.

MANCHESTER, March 11, 1800.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A NEW edition of A Father's Inſtructions was called for by the bookſeller, at the time when the author had received a large packet of letters and papers, tranſmitted to his oldeſt ſon, now deceaſed, at different periods, and on various occaſions both before and during his reſidence at St. Peterſburgh. On reviewing theſe communications, he conceived that ſome of them might furniſh materials for the addition of a THIRD PART *to the preſent work. He has, therefore, made the neceſſary ſelection; with ſuch corrections, omiſſions, or enlargements, as to render not unfit for the preſs, what was written without the moſt diſtant view to publication. Though the ſubjects treated of, in many of the Papers, are addreſſed to a young Clergyman, ſoon after his entrance into Holy Orders, he truſts they will be found of ſufficiently general importance, and ſuch as ought to be comprehended in a ſcheme of moral and religious inſtruction.*

The Inquiry into the Origin of Evil was written in the year 1793; *and was ſuggeſted partly by the public calamities of that period, but principally by the*

the recent death of the author's ſecond ſon at Edinburgh, who had nearly finiſhed his courſe of academical ſtudies, and whoſe talents, acquirements, and virtues promiſed the full gratification of a Father's hopes.

At this extraordinary æra, when ſcepticiſm and infidelity boldly aim at the eſtabliſhment of univerſal atheiſm, the cauſe of religion requires the moſt zealous exertions in its ſupport. The author has, therefore, been induced to ſtate ſome of the ſpecial evidences of the importance and authenticity of Chriſtianity, as they ſubſiſt in modern times; *and from their preſent cogency has endeavoured to ſhew the guilt of indifference or rejection. He has likewiſe, inſerted a Diſcourſe, taken from the collection of his ſon, in which Piety is proved to be the conſummation of Morality, and to have a neceſſary connection with all the perſonal and ſocial virtues of mankind.*

Of the other chapters in this manual no particular explanation can be required, as the views with which they have been written will be ſufficiently obvious in the peruſal. The author has, therefore, now only to requeſt the ſame candid indulgence from his readers, which he has ſo often and ſo largely before experienced.

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Published by the Author.

ESSAYS

MEDICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL,

IN TWO VOLUMES, OCTAVO;

The Fourth Edition,

REVISED AND CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED.

ALSO

MORAL AND LITERARY

DISSERTATIONS.

The Second Edition,

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

ERRATA.

Page 64, line 11, *for* that obligation is *read* thoſe obligations are.
82, 1, *for* are often *read* is often.
83, 1, *for* And that he is *read* That he is.

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THE WAYS OF PROVIDENCE;

A FRAGMENT.

---------- IN vain the Hermit laboured to diſpel his doubts, and to impreſs his mind with more juſt and pious views of the divine adminiſtration. They had now reached, in their morning walk, the foot of Mount Carmel. Let us aſcend together, ſaid the holy father. Alonzo acquieſced, following his venerable guide. Ever and anon they ſtopped to contemplate the magnificent ſcenery below, progreſſively enlarging its amplitude, till at laſt its boundary appeared to be the whole expanſe of heaven. Direct your attention, Alonzo, to the diſtant ocean, which connects kingdom with kingdom; and, by encircling the whole, unites all the nations of the earth into one family; communicating the productions of art and nature; furniſhing incentives to induſtry, enterprize, and ſcience; and multiply-

ing all the conveniences, embelliſhments, and gratifications of life. Still more important, continued the hermit, is this vaſt abyſs of waters, in the divine œconomy of Providence. It is a ſtorehouſe of the ſalubrious air we breathe, and the ſource of all the refreſhing ſhowers which drop down fatneſs on the lands; which ſupply the fountain with its rills, and the rivers with their ſtreams. The verdure of the meadows below, the luxuriant foliage of yonder foreſt, the gay profuſion of flowers, the ſweet perfume of bloſſoms, and the juicy fruits into which they ripen, are the gifts of God, through the inſtrumentality of deſcending rains, aided by the genial influences of light and heat. Great luminary of heaven, how wide ſpreading, and beneficent are thy active beams! Day and night, ſummer and winter, ſeed-time and harveſt come at their appointed ſeaſons, as the earth in its revolutions participates of thy cheering rays. To thy illumination this beautiful landſcape owes its charms. And the curious ſtructure of the eye, which beholds it, without thy emanations would have been created in vain.

But a black cloud, like that deſcried by Elijah from the ſummit of this mountain, now roſe in the weſt. At firſt *no bigger than the hand*, it ſpread over the expanded firmament. The whole face of nature underwent a mournful

a mournful change; and the heart of Alonzo, a while ſince exulting in all that he beheld, was now filled with terror and dejection. He viewed the ſtormy ocean, and diſtant ſhipwreck with affright. He ſaw the valleys deluged with rain, and the inhabitants in their peaceful dwellings waſhed away by the impetuous floods. The earth trembled under his feet; and the mountain reſounded with hollow murmurs, emitting volleys of ſmoke and fire. Where now was he to look for traces of a benignant Creator, or wiſe Providence? Evil appeared to predominate in the works of nature. And under this gloomy impreſſion he recalled to his perturbed memory all the ſufferings, which he had endured from his own vices, and the guilt of others. His boſom was torn with conflicting paſſions: And thinking o'er all the bitterneſs of diſſolution, in the anguiſh of his ſoul, he was tempted to adopt the wicked counſel given to Job, *and curſing God to die.*

But the tempeſt ſubſided; the clouds were diſperſed; the ſun beams began to burſt forth; and the glooms, which overſpread the firmament, vaniſhed, like fleeting ſhadows. A ſolemn ſtilneſs enſued, communicating to his mind a holy calm, which was ſucceeded by the reſtoration of its wonted energies. He awoke, as it were, from an oppreſſive dream.

His heart waxed warm with devotion; and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he thus addreſſed himſelf to the Deity. "Oh! my God and "Father! I am now ſenſible that in mercy "thou gaveſt me being; and that thy loving "kindneſs hath followed me through the "whole courſe of it. Therefore, in thee will "I repoſe my confidence; for thou wilt look "with compaſſion on a wounded ſpirit, anxi-"ous for thy favour, yet conſcious and "fearful of its own unworthineſs. Let the "light of thy countenance ſhine upon me, "to diſpel the darkneſs in which my mind "has been involved. Give me to feel the "comforting influence of thy holy ſpirit, that "I may indulge no gloomy imaginations, no "vain terrors, nor heart-corroding cares. "For anxiety depreſſes intellectual vigour; "diminiſhes affiance in thee; and diſqualifies "for the active duties of life. But weakneſs "overcome is ſtrength; errors detected be-"come the brightneſs of truth; and penitence "for vice may be exalted into the ſublime "of virtue. Teach me to make thy terrors "cordial, and thy ſtripes healing to my ſoul: "And fill me with the bleſſed truſt, that thy "ſervant, who might have been loſt, is now "happily found; and that by the preſent ſad-"neſs of my countenance, my heart may be "for ever made better."

ON THE DIVINE PERMISSION OF EVIL, NATURAL AND MORAL.

NOTHING can be more intereſting to rational, moral, and dependent beings, than to form a juſt eſtimate of the attributes of God, and of the adminiſtration of his Divine Providence. From the nature of ſupreme intelligence, we may abſtractedly derive irrefragable proofs of ſovereign power, wiſdom, and goodneſs. But few minds are ſufficiently cultivated to comprehend a ſcheme of theology ſo purely philoſophical; and ſtill more inconſiderable is the number of thoſe, who are capable of being impreſſed by it with pious confidence, reverence and love. To the actual government of the world, therefore, as it appears to our experience and obſervation, we muſt refer for the foundation of thoſe practical principles of religion, which are eſſential to the regulation of our conduct; to inſpire us with gratitude in proſperity; to afford us ſolace in adverſity; and to furniſh us with well-grounded expectations of a future and glorious immortality. Yet ſituated as we are on a narrow ſpot of this wide world, itſelf only a ſmall part of an immenſe univerſe, and inhabited by generations of men, who have ſucceeded each other for thouſands of years,

and will continue to paſs away ages and ages to come, how ſhall we elevate our views to the ſublime contemplation of a conſtitution ſo immenſe; of an order ſo infinite; and of a ſeries of events involving in them all that belongs to the paſt, to the preſent, and to futurity.

But though the Deity be thus incomprehenſible in the immenſity of his works, yet he has graciouſly diſplayed himſelf to our obſervation and underſtanding in more confined views of his wiſdom, power, and goodneſs. And to theſe we muſt refer, if we would juſtly appreciate the divine adminiſtration. Let us now, therefore, with humble confidence, make the ſolemn and important appeal. And O! Father of our ſpirits,

"What in us is dark
"Illumine: what is low raiſe and ſupport:
"That to the height of this great argument,
"We may aſſert eternal Providence,
"And juſtify the ways of God to men."

MILTON.

Evil may be conſidered under the three following views:

I. As purely phyſical, or appertaining ſolely to the material ſyſtem of nature.

II. As phyſical, but influencing, or dependent on human agency.

III. As

III. As moral in its origin, nature, and effects.

I. PHYSICAL EVIL, as it regards the material ſyſtem of God's works, can alone conſiſt in what counteracts the deſign of the Creator, by diſturbing the order, or ſubverting the œconomy of nature. But if we admit the ſupreme wiſdom, and uncontroulable power of the Sovereign of the univerſe, ſuch a ſuppoſition involves in it not only inconſiſtency, but groſs abſurdity. And if we ſuperadd to this conſideration our incapacity to judge of final cauſes, or to trace the connection and ſubſerviency of parts to the whole of a ſyſtem, immenſely ample in its extent, we ſhall ſee abundant reaſon to reject the preſumption of arraigning the counſels, or condemning the meaſures of the great author and preſerver of nature. Let us, however, attentively inveſtigate thoſe appearances, which, in the eye of the arrogant ſceptic, mark a deficiency either of wiſdom, or of power. And, though we may not be able to obviate every difficulty or objection, we ſhall at leaſt, I truſt, derive ſufficient evidence from the inquiry, to vindicate the adminiſtration of God. "A little philoſophy," ſays Bacon, "may incline the mind to atheiſm; but depth in philoſophy will bring it about again to reaſon. For while the mind of man looketh upon ſecond cauſes

cauſes ſcattered, it may ſometimes reſt in them and go no farther: But when it beholdeth the chain of them linked together, it muſt needs fly to Providence and Deity."

Earthquakes, volcanoes, ſtorms, inundations, and the wide deſerts of the globe, are the defects and blemiſhes in creation, which are ſuppoſed to arraign the power or benevolence of the Creator.

Earthquakes are the occaſional effect, either of that central heat, which is neceſſary to communicate warmth to the great maſs of ſolid matter, of which the globe conſiſts; or they are the exploſions of a ſubtile electric fluid, eſſential to vegetation and probably alſo to animal life. In their origin, therefore, they are not evil, and from their operation we may reaſonably preſume to deduce terraqueous and atmoſpheric changes of the higheſt importance in the formation of minerals; the opening of fiſſures in mountains for the paſſage of waters; the medicating ſuch ſtreams; and the production of ſufficient outlets for effluvia, on which the permanent ſalubrity of the air muſt depend.

Volcanoes are probably the *ſpiracula* or vents of that central fire, which, if not thus diſcharged, might become redundant and injurious to the globe. And they have given riſe to the formation of mountains, and to changes

changes in the ſtructure of countries, which have added beauty and utility to the face of nature. We may remark alſo, that beds of the moſt valuable ores have been elevated by them, from the bowels of the earth, and ſo diſpoſed as to be within the reach of the art and induſtry of man.

Storms are of known and acknowledged utility in preſerving from corruption the great maſs of waters; and in producing ſalubrious conſtitutions of the air. Without their beneficial influence, vegetation would languiſh, and animal life become a prey to diſeaſe and peſtilence.

To judge of inundations, we may view the Nile in its progreſs, fertiliſing the country; reſtoring health to the ſickly inhabitants of Egypt; and leaving their fields in a ſtate of preparation for all the riches of a future harveſt. And what is true of the regular overflowings of this mighty river, is applicable, in a conſiderable degree, to ſuch as are apparently more contingent.

But on what principle ſhall we reconcile to wiſdom, which forms nothing in vain, and to benevolence, which has ever for its object the higheſt ſum of utility, the deſerts of creation; mountains covered with perennial ſnow; vaſt plains of burning ſand, or extended foreſts full of luxuriant vegetation, yet unfrequented for

for ages, and which may remain, for ages to come, unknown? Theſe are queſtions difficult, but not unanſwerable. The Alps, the Pyrenees, the Andes, and other immenſe ridges of mountains, may be regarded as the neceſſary inſtruments of Providence in the generation of winds; in the diſcharge of the ſuperabundant moiſture of the air; and, above all, as inexhauſtible reſervoirs of thoſe rich ſtreams, which iſſue from their melting ſnows.

The ſcorching ſands of the torrid zone are, alſo, powerful agents of the Deity for good; inaſmuch as it is by the oppoſite efficiency of heat and cold, that the atmoſphere is put in motion, and that its movements are rendered ſo uniform and permanent, as to ſubſerve thoſe important purpoſes, which we know to be anſwered in all the latitudes where the trade winds regularly blow. But, for what were the vaſt foreſts made, in which no human footſteps can be traced, and which are the habitations of ravenous beaſts and venomous reptiles. Are they not, alſo, habitations of innumerable ſpecies of birds and inſects; of an infinitude of animals all gifted with exiſtence, claiming ſupport from God, and participating largely in his bounty? Shall the pride of man arrogate to himſelf every bleſſing of heaven? Even in this inſtance may his pride be gratified. Let it, however, be mixed with

with thankfulneſs and reverence to his great and beneficent Creator. For the herbage and the woods, which flouriſh in remote and unpeopled regions are profitable to us by the ſupplies which they furniſh of vital air, wafted by the winds to repleniſh the vitiated atmoſphere. "In this operation the fragrant roſe, and deadly night-ſhade, alike exert their powers. And from the oak of the foreſt to the graſs of the field, every individual plant is ſubſervient to mankind," though hitherto undiſtinguiſhed by any property adapted to our uſe as food or medicine. But wide tracts of country, now unfrequented by the human ſpecies may, in the progreſs of time, become a refuge from tyranny, and the abodes of induſtry, art, and ſcience. This intereſting truth is amply verified by the extenſive ſettlements on the northern continent of America; and it may be part of the plan of divine Providence that the wilds of Aſia and Africa may, hereafter, become the habitations of men, enjoying the bleſſings of religion, liberty, and of good government.

From this brief and imperfect attempt to elucidate the more obſcure and doubtful appearances in the ſyſtem of nature, we may be warranted to conclude that abſolute phyſical evil has no exiſtence in the works of God. And if the world, which we inhabit, be regarded

garded with a peculiar reference to man, as the theatre of action for moral and intelligent beings, the unceaſing and uniform operation of general laws is eſſential to the exerciſe of his powers; to his progreſſive improvement; and to his preſent and future felicity. Were the ſtate of things changed, there could ſubſiſt no art, no ſcience, no experience, and conſequently no certainty either of expectation or of enjoyment. But this leads to the conſideration of the ſecond diviſion of our ſubject, and to inquire into the exiſtence of thoſe alledged phyſical evils which influence, or are dependent on, human agency.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE hiſtory of the patriarch Job preſents to our view, in all the lively colouring of eaſtern imagery, a ſeries of calamities almoſt ſurpaſſing human endurance. In different parts of his domain, his oxen, his camels, and his aſſes were carried off by bands of Sabæan and Chaldean plunderers. His ſheep, and his ſervants who tended them, were ſuddenly conſumed by fire from heaven. During the hour of feſtivity, his ſons and his daughters were buried in the ruins of their brother's habitation, overſet by a hurricane from the wilderneſs. The intelligence of theſe diſaſters Job received

received with poignant grief, but at the ſame time with humble and devout acquieſcence. He *aroſe and rent his mantle, and ſhaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worſhipped, and ſaid, Naked came I out of my mother's womb; and naked ſhall I return thither: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job ſinned not:* For ſenſibility is perfectly compatible with fortitude and reſignation; and its exiſtence is even preſuppoſed by them. He who feels not the weight of God's judgments can require no mental energies to ſuſtain them; exerciſe no patience in their endurance; nor repoſe, with pious confidence, on his juſtice and mercy. But when the afflictions of Job were extended to his own perſon; when he was ſmitten with ſore boils, from the ſole of his foot unto the crown of his head; when the wife of his boſom tormented him with evil counſel, and his friends aggravated his ſufferings inſtead of affording comfort, in the anguiſh of his heart he curſed the day of his birth; and, in the expreſſion of his ardent longings for death, he thus expoſtulated with his Maker. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter in ſoul?* But herein the patriarch cannot be acquitted of charging God fooliſhly; though candour unites with pity in pleading the excuſe

cuſe of human frailty. Under circumſtances the moſt painful and diſaſtrous, we have a poſt aſſigned us by the Author of our being, and the Sovereign diſpoſer of all events. And it is our duty to be at once "reſigned to die, or reſolute to live."

But is this conſtitution of nature, in verity, ſo adverſe to that happineſs, which is the end and aim of man; ſo fraught with diſappointment, ſo prolific of diſaſters, and ſo full of pain, diſeaſe, and ſuffering? Hath God ſent forth Satan, as it is recorded he did to Job, with power to put forth his hand, and to inflict the full meaſure of calamity on the world? Or muſt we refer the ſorrowful events of life, according to the Manichean hereſy, to an evil principle, co-exiſtent, co-eternal, and co-equal with the omnipotent Sovereign of the univerſe? Both ſuppoſitions are too abſurd and impious, to require a ſerious confutation. If the creation originated in wiſdom and benevolence, it muſt ſtill be governed by the ſame tranſcendent attributes. And, though we may be unable, from our limited capacities, to trace them through all their connections, dependencies, and diverſified energies; yet we are ſufficiently encouraged to purſue the pious and animating inquiry. Every ſtep we take will ſtrengthen our conviction of the providence of God; will enliven our gratitude towards the giver of every good

good gift; and humble us under his afflictive diſpenſations.

We have already taken a brief ſurvey of thoſe *phænomena*, which belong excluſively to the material ſyſtem of nature: And however unqualified we found ourſelves to ſcan the ways of Omnipotence, yet we diſcovered ſufficient evidence to conclude, that no abſolute evil exiſts in the creation; or, in other words, nothing, which counteracts the deſign of the wiſe and beneficent Creator, by diſturbing the order or ſubverting the œconomy of his works. Let us now enlarge our induction by conſidering thoſe phyſical operations, that are relative to man; in which he neceſſarily participates; and that reciprocally affect, or are affected by, his agency.

In the ſtructure of the human frame the divine author appears to have had in view a progreſſive plan, comprehending,

I. The multiplied relations of the preſent life:

II. The expectation of a future, improved, and immortal ſtate of exiſtence. To this plan, therefore, our inveſtigation muſt be accommodated.

Man enters upon the firſt ſtage of his being in a ſtate of corporeal and mental imbecility. But the parental affection ſupplies every defect of ſtrength, and anticipates every want of na-

ture. By diverſified exertions, the muſcular organs gradually acquire their proper tone and action. The ſenſes are invigorated, and corrected in their perceptions, by uſe and experience. The appetites, the paſſions, and affections are developed. Attention, curioſity, complacency, and admiration, are rouſed; and the memory becomes copiouſly ſtored with ideas for ſubſequent combination and reflection. The young ſpectator learns to diſtinguiſh, and to be delighted with his parents, his brethren, and his ſiſters. And this emotion, frequently re-iterated, conſtitutes a moral attachment; which reciprocal offices increaſe, gratitude enlivens, and habit perpetuates. As connections are extended new intereſts occur, and new dependences are formed. The paſſions and affections are called forth into action; and ſympathy, benevolence, generoſity, magnanimity, ſelf-denial, and fortitude, and the correſponding principles which are oppoſed to them, are diſplayed, foſtered, and diſciplined in the purſuits, and even in the paſtimes of childhood and youth. The intellectual faculties, at this period, commence their energies; objects are diſcriminated; compariſons are drawn, and concluſions formed, by a deciding judgment, which admits of no appeal. Reaſon thus aſſumes its aſcendancy; and the conſciouſneſs of right and wrong attaches

taches itſelf both to ſentiment and to action. The mind now becomes capable of recognizing the Deity in its own ſtructure and operations, and in the ſurrounding works of nature. Filial reverence, gratitude, and love, refined and ſpiritualized, are applied to the Father of the univerſe: His conſtant preſence is felt; his favour is ſought; his condemnation is dreaded; and his guardian protection is earneſtly ſolicited whenever trouble aſſails, or danger is to be encountered. Thus an intercourſe is eſtabliſhed between God and the human ſoul; and the conviction of his ſuperintending providence becomes a ſupport in affliction; a check to vicious propenſities; and a powerful incentive to virtue and to honour.

In manhood, the acquirements of youth, both intellectual and moral, receive a direction adapted to the buſineſs and to the duties of life. In this direction, they undergo further diſcipline and improvement. And as higher and more extended intereſts are now to be purſued, a wider ſcope is eſtabliſhed for the exertion of their reſpective energies. Deſires and affections, hitherto unknown, ſpring up in the breaſt; the tendereſt of all connections is formed; and the charities of huſband and father, wife and mother, gladden and bleſs the remainder of life, though they multiply its cares, and its agitations. But attach-

ments are not now confined to a houſehold, to kindred, to the village, or to the diſtrict in which man reſides. He is the member of a large community; is intereſted in its laws and polity; and feeling the generous ſpirit of patriotiſm, he labours to promote the liberty, the proſperity, and the happineſs of his country. By the intercourſe of nations; by the purſuits of ſcience; or by the commercial concerns in which he is engaged, he is conſtituted a citizen of the world; is animated with the principle of general philanthropy; and becomes an advocate for the rights of all mankind.

In this career old age advances, at firſt with ſlow and unheeded ſteps; but after a certain period, rapidly and with gloomy deſolation. The ſenſitive powers are now blunted; fancy loſes its gay images; the paſſions grow torpid, the affections languid, and the functions of life are contracted within a dull and narrow ſphere. Yet under all theſe circumſtances, *the hoary head found in the way of righteouſneſs is a crown of glory:* And it is meet that there ſhould be a pauſe, before the anxious purſuits of this tranſitory world are exchanged for the offices and enjoyments of eternity; that the heart, being weaned from earth, by the ſuſpenſion of vain aſſociations and idle habits, may be better fitted for heaven.

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The ſtages of human life, which have been thus imperfectly deſcribed, are intimately connected with and dependant on each other, and form one regular aſcending ſcale. It is obvious, alſo, that they ſeparately, as well as conjointly, bear reference to a future ſtate, wherein the faculties, which have been here evolved, exerciſed, and trained, will be advanced, by the like progreſſive ſteps, to higher and higher degrees of maturity and excellence. Conſidering the world, therefore, as a ſchool, and man as the pupil of nature, his ſtructure, ſituation and deſignation imply that he muſt ſuſtain the inconveniences of weakneſs before ſtrength can be attained; of error, before right judgments are acquired; and of miſguided paſſion, before experience has taught ſelf-government. We may, reverentially, compare this divine inſtitution with the ſyſtem of human education. And as a wiſe parent, in training up a beloved ſon, would combine action with reſt; labour with relaxation; and correction with indulgence; ſo we have the higheſt authority for the concluſion that *whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth:* Even Jeſus, *the captain of our ſalvation*, was made *perfect through ſuffering*. And the great apoſtle of the Gentiles hath emphatically declared of himſelf, and St. James, his fellow labourer in the goſpel; *we glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation*

worketh patience; *and patience experience*; *and experience hope.* In the varied taſks, however, which man has to perform, a large ſum of felicity is inherent. And the pain, the labour, and the danger, which he has to encounter, are not to be denominated evils; ſince he is gifted with the power of rendering them ſubſervient to his higheſt intereſt and everlaſting good. This important truth merits a more ample inveſtigation; and we ſhall devote the next chapter to the conſideration of the benefits reſulting from thoſe conditions of human exiſtence, which the gloom of ſome chriſtians, and the impiety of atheiſts, have dwelt upon as the direful ills of life.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

WHEN our firſt parents were expelled from paradiſe, Moſes records this denunciation of God as addreſſed to Adam. *Curſed is the ground for thy ſake. In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground*; *for duſt thou art, and unto duſt ſhalt thou return.* But whatever might be the original conſtitution of the human frame, certain it now is that labour is neceſſary to the regular performance of the animal functions; that inaction produces bodily diſeaſe and mental imbecility; and that in muſcular exertions, when not

not exceſſive nor too long continued, there is no inconſiderable degree of ſenſitive gratification. Were the earth to produce ſpontaneouſly the ſuſtenance and comforts of life, man would be without incitements to thoſe energies, which are eſſential to his health and well being, and would ſink into a ſtate of torpor, which might degrade his condition even below that of the brute creation. In the culture of the ground not only induſtry, but obſervation, invention, knowledge, and ſocial aſſiſtance are required. Arts thus originate; civil polities are formed; an interchange of commodities is eſtabliſhed; commerce is extended; and by the reciprocity of wants and of ſupplies, the productions of nature are multiplied, and univerſally diffuſed. The whole globe by ſuch intercourſe, may progreſſively form one great family, acquiring, as generations ſucceed one another, degrees of ſcience and improvement, far beyond all our preſent conceptions. It has been eſtimated, by political arithmeticians, that the daily employment of the working hands in every ſtate during the ſpace of four hours, is adequate to the full ſupply, for all its members, of food, raiment, and habitation. But when the powers of the mind have been ſtimulated to activity, new wants and deſires ſpring up; and in proſecuting the means of their indulgence, more ample and

diverſified ſcope is given to the exerciſe and enlargement of all the moral and intellectual powers of our nature. In the complicated buſineſs of life, the apparent end purſued is, in reality, often valuable only for the means employed in its acquiſition. This truth might be exemplified in the laborious ſearch after wealth, in the toils of ambition, and even in the inveſtigation of ſcientific truth. The objects they hold forth to view are often regarded far beyond their abſolute value: But relatively conſidered, as furniſhing employment for virtuous diſpoſitions, and for the active faculties of the mind, they are of ineſtimable importance in the great ſcheme of human education for a higher and better ſtate of exiſtence. Solomon, therefore, hath well obſerved, *In all labour there is profit. Go to the ant thou ſluggard. Conſider her ways and be wiſe. Hate not laborious work, neither huſbandry, which the Moſt High hath ordained!*

In advancing theſe pleas for the benefits of labour, let me not be underſtood to juſtify that debaſing ſervitude, that more than Egyptian bondage, and thoſe life-conſuming toils, which avarice, cruelty, and oppreſſion, have rendered the miſerable lot of ſo large a portion of mankind. To impute ſuch wretchedneſs to the author of our frames, would be not merely to *charge God fooliſhly*, but groſsly to blaſpheme

pheme his holy name. For though nothing can ſubſiſt in the univerſe without his permiſſion, yet we are ever to bear in mind the full and genuine import of this truth. Divine permiſſion is to be underſtood in two very different ſenſes; either as what is not prohibited by ſovereign wiſdom; or, as not prevented by the direct interpoſition of ſovereign power. In the former ſenſe, it were impious to allege the permiſſion of injuſtice and inhumanity; and falſe, when we know they have been ſtrictly forbidden under the ſevereſt penalties. But in the latter ſenſe, the government of God over rational, moral, and accountable beings, requires the freedom of man's agency; and if he deliberately and voluntarily incur the guilt, he muſt likewiſe incur the puniſhment of inflicting miſery on his fellow-creatures. This intereſting obſervation may be extended to bodily pain and diſeaſe; which are the next objects of our inquiry; and are too often the conſequences of human folly, intemperance, or profligacy. But though theſe caſes may properly be regarded as deviations from that benignant conſtitution which has the ſanction and appointment of the Deity; yet ſuch is our ſtructure, that ſuffering and ſickneſs muſt neceſſarily be experienced; not only from unavoidable caſualties, but from the ſupplies which are required,

quired, the injuries of which we are to receive warning, and the gradual decay of our corporeal and periſhable organs. The appetites are inſtincts of our nature, adapted to the preſervation of our being, and to the continuance of our ſpecies. It is wiſely ordained, therefore, that their cravings ſhould be importunate, and even painful when too long neglected. The uneaſineſs, however, to which our improvidence may ſometimes give occaſion, is more than counterbalanced by the pleaſurable impreſſions, of which they are made ſuſceptible. The ſenſes are endued with a delicacy of perception, which often renders them the inſtruments of uneaſineſs. But they are the watchful guardians of our bodily frame; and give timely notice of whatever is injurious to it. And to their exquiſite powers it is to be aſcribed that we are alive to all the ſweet perfumes of nature, all the delights of harmony, and all the charms of viſion.

Health, as conſiſting in the ſoundneſs and vigour of the bodily organs, and in their complete aptitude for exertion and enjoyment, is doubtleſs of ineſtimable conſideration. But the occaſional ſuſpenſion of this bleſſing may be neceſſary to obviate the abuſes to which it is liable; to evince its high value; to remedy the injuries it may have ſuſtained; and to inſure its future more permanent duration.

A ſtrong

A ſtrong conſtitution is too often made ſubſervient to ſenſuality, ebriety, and other licentious indulgences, which, if not ſeaſonably interrupted, by the experience of conſequential ſuffering, would prove deſtructive to the animal œconomy, and bring on premature decrepitude or death. Diſeaſes, under theſe circumſtances, not only furniſh a beneficial reſtraint, and preſerve the mind from contamination; but they are often the remedies which nature has kindly provided, for the reſtoration of the vital functions. A good, which has been thus loſt and beneficently reſtored, will be prized according to its high deſert; and being cheriſhed with aſſiduous care, will be prolonged, and applied to its proper uſes in the great buſineſs of life. But ſickneſs, it muſt be acknowledged, is not always remedial in its tendency, and frequently produces degrees of protracted languiſhment and pain, grievous to endure, and obſtructive of thoſe *active offices*, which, in his preſent ſphere, man is called upon to perform. There are duties, however, of another claſs, not leſs eſſential to the improvement and excellence of his moral and religious character: And where is a ſchool to be found, like the chamber of ſickneſs for meekneſs, patience, reſignation, gratitude, and devout truſt in God?—There pride is humbled; the angry paſſions ſubſide;

ſubſide; animoſities ceaſe; and the vanities of the world loſe their bewitching attractions. Falſe aſſociations are there corrected; true eſtimates are formed; and the good man learns to rejoice in the conviction, *that if this earthly tabernable be diſſolved, he has a building of God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* Whilſt theſe *paſſive virtues* are cultivated in the ſuffering individual, all who miniſter to him have their beſt diſpoſitions exerciſed and improved. Tenderneſs, humanity, ſympathy, friendſhip, and domeſtic love, on ſuch occaſions, find that ſphere which is peculiarly adapted to their exertion. And all the ſofter charities of life derive, from theſe ſources, their higheſt refinements. Juſtly, therefore, hath it been declared, *it is better to go to the houſe of mourning, than to the houſe of feaſting—and that by the ſadneſs of the countenance the heart is made better.*

There is, however, *a ſadneſs of the countenance* that is always enumerated among the evils of life, which admits not of the ſupports and comforts of hope, and is accompanied with irremediable feebleneſs, with an actual decay of the organs of ſenſe, and an apparent torpor of all the mental powers. Such is the ſtate of extreme OLD AGE, which Solomon has allegorically deſcribed with great ſtrength and beauty of language. *It is the day when the keepers*

keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves, and the grinders ſhall ceaſe becauſe they are few; and thoſe that look out of the windows be darkened. The graſshopper ſhall be a burthen, and deſire ſhall fail. But gloomy as this deſcription appears, it is concluded by the averment of a truth in the higheſt degree conſolatory; and on which we, as chriſtians, may rely with a confidence, it was not given to the wiſe king of Iſrael ſo fully to experience. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was; and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God, who gave it.*

The imbecility and ſufferings of extreme old age muſt, from their nature, be of ſhort continuance; and it ſhould be recollected, alſo, that they are the lot only of a very ſmall proportion of mankind. Neither are they felt as a ſevere grievance by thoſe who ſeem to ſink under their preſſure. For ſenſation, at this cloſing period of life, is deadened; memory is ſuſpended; and with it the power is loſt of comparing paſt with preſent perceptions. Dotage, therefore, is much leſs melancholy to the patient himſelf than to the humane ſpectator, who views it as the traveller beholds the mighty Babylon in ruins. By the changes which have taken place in the brain, and ſenſitive organs, the medium of communication between the mind and the external world is, in

in a great degree, deſtroyed; and it is probable that the ſeeming intellectual wanderings, which we notice, ariſe from nervous fallacies, if the expreſſion may be allowed, not from mental incapacity. Indeed, it may be preſumed that the ſpirit, which is ſo ſoon *to return to God who gave it*, ſtill continues improving in its energies, by internal and reflective operations; though to us, for the reaſons above aſſigned, they are inſcrutable. In the deep ſleep which ſucceeds certain maladies, ſomething analogous occurs*. But be this as it may, if dotage be conſidered as the antecedent to a future life, it is not more an evil than

* Do the following facts afford any confirmation of this ſuppoſition? "In the year 1744 Mr. Pope evidently grew more and more infirm. He had frequent deliriums; and as Dodſley told me, with tears in his eyes, Pope aſked him one day, as he ſat by his bedſide, "what great arm is that I ſee coming out of the wall?" Recovering another day from one of theſe deliriums, he ſaid to Spence, I am ſo certain of the ſoul's being immortal, that I ſeem to feel it within me, as it were by intuition." Warton's edit. of Pope's Works, vol. I. Life. p. lxiv.

I have received authentic information of a ſtate of fatuity, ſubſiſting from infancy, and nearly approaching to idiotiſm, that, after thirty-four years, terminated in a conſumption of the lungs: Towards the fatal cloſe of this malady, the patient diſplayed a degree of intellectual vigour aſtoniſhing to her family and friends, and not leſs ſo to a learned and judicious clergyman, who viſited her officially, and who communicated this account to me. See Eſſays Med. Philoſ. and Exp. vol. II. p. 340, fourth edit.

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the imbecility with which man enters into the preſent ſtate of being. Both are to be regarded as preparative to farther advancement, though we muſt be content to remain ignorant of the mode, in which the ſupreme wiſdom accompliſhes his divine purpoſes.

This bleak and barren winter of terreſtrial exiſtence occurs only in a few ſolitary caſes, during the courſe of a whole generation: And of the autumnal ſeaſon of life we all aſpire to the attainment. It has been ſtated as the reward of wiſdom, that *length of days is in her right hand: And to come to the grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in*, is the privilege aſſigned to the righteous. We cannot, therefore, with conſiſtency, regard as an evil, that to which the will univerſally aſpires; and which reaſon as univerſally approves. To the intelligent and the virtuous, advanced age preſents a ſcene of tranquil enjoyment; of obedient appetites; of well regulated affections; of maturity in knowledge; and of calm preparation for immortality. In this ſerene and dignified ſtate, placed as it were on the confines of two worlds, the mind of a good man reviews what is paſt, with the complacency of an approving conſcience; and looks forward unto futurity with humble confidence in the mercy of God, and with devout aſpirations towards his eternal and ever increaſing

creaſing favour. In the fervent language of the apoſtle, he finds himſelf diſpoſed to exclaim, *I have fought a good fight*; *I have finiſhed my courſe*; *I have kept the faith*; *and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory.*

Death, the laſt evil in our preſent lot alleged by thoſe, who ſcruple not to *charge God fooliſhly*, cannot ſurely merit this denomination, when it ſucceeds a long and well ſpent life, and is the avenue to everlaſting felicity. To the wicked it may indeed be regarded as a direful event, but is rendered ſuch only by their folly and guilt. The uncertainty of it is wiſely ordained; that we may, at all times, be duly prepared for ſo awful a change. It is, alſo, to be conſidered, as one of thoſe phyſical effects, which, by our attention and foreſight, we have frequently the power to counteract. For though mortality is a law of nature, the preciſe period of it depends on numberleſs contingences, which are within the reach of our obſervation and influence: And it forms no ſmall part of the offices of life to guard ourſelves, and thoſe connected with us, againſt danger, diſeaſe, and their fatal conſequence. The being, however, which cloſes here, may commence its progreſs in another world, with ſuperior advantages from the very point of its termination. This is a ſufficient ground to juſtify the ways of God

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in the extinction of early life. For the mortality of a promiſing child may at once be a benefit to his mourning parents, and to the *ſpirits of the juſt made perfect*; ſince our Saviour has aſſured us, that *of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven.* Even the ſinner, cut off in the career of unrepented vice, may poſſibly experience, through the divine grace, the ſtroke of death to be a mercy to himſelf, as it is likely to become ſo to his companions in guilt. For habits, otherwiſe unconquerable, are thus broken; and aſſociations are deſtroyed, the continuance of which might have produced ſtill greater and more permanent debaſement of the human faculties.

Let us hear then, the concluſion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. But the fear and obedience recommended by Solomon imply not a ſervile dread or a ſordid obſervance of arbitrary commands; but a full conviction of the juſtice and goodneſs of the Deity, and of our obligations to him, founded on theſe divine attributes. And if there be any who have doubts remaining in their minds, let them liſten, with humble reverence, to the ſolemn appeal which the Lord Jehovah condeſcended to make to his diſcontented and ungrateful people the Jews. *Hear now, O houſe of Iſrael, are not my ways equal? are not your*

ways unequal? Repent and turn from all your tranſgreſſions. So iniquity ſhall not be your ruin. Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, whereby you have tranſgreſſed; and make you a new heart, and a new ſpirit; for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael! I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

TO a benevolent and devout mind, no ſubject can be more intereſting, than the goodneſs and juſtice of God, in the formation and government of the univerſe, and in the ſtructure and deſignation of man. Benevolence, indeed, has its chief ſupport in the perſuaſion, that the whole human race are the children of one common Father, created with active powers, capable of unlimited and ever increaſing degrees of improvement; and that they are joint heirs of glory and immortality. And devotion is alone compatible with a full conviction of the exerciſe of thoſe divine attributes, which conciliate veneration, confidence, gratitude, and love. He, *who cometh to God, muſt believe not merely that he is*, but *that he is alſo the rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him.* Truſt, however, would be childiſh and futile, if not founded on knowledge and truth. Hence the apoſtle has, with great propriety

propriety delivered it as a ſolemn injunction, that every *man ſhould be prepared to give a reaſon of the hope that is in him.*

In the views which we formerly took of the divine adminiſtration, we ſaw abundant proof that the ſyſtem of nature, which is open to our inveſtigation, furniſhes ſuch numerous and ſtriking diſplays of harmony and goodneſs, as fully warrant us, by analogy, to conclude, that what is yet inſcrutable is no leſs harmonious and good. Phyſical evil, therefore, as relative to the material ſyſtem of God's works, and conſiſting in the defect, injury, or ſubverſion of the original plans of the Creator, we may juſtly preſume, has no where exiſtence. And with reſpect to thoſe operations of nature, in which man is involved, and which reciprocally affect or are affected by his agency, we ſaw abundant reaſon to conclude, that all are conſiſtent with the great ends of his being, preſent improvement and future felicity. Labour, pain, diſeaſe, and old age, which are often painted as direful allotments of humanity, on a cloſer inſpection, appeared to be wiſe and beneficent in their tendency; often productive of immediate benefit, and therefore not to be made the occaſion of *charging God fooliſhly*, as the author of evil. Even death is a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed, by thoſe who are in a ſtate of

due preparation for it, as the avenue to immortality. *Bleſſed are they who die in the Lord; for they reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.* Nor are thoſe, who ſurvive, to ſorrow as without hope; or to regard this event as the extinction of friendſhip and of love. We ſhall, I humbly truſt, not only recognize the objects of our tender attachment, in the regions of felicity, but ſhall enjoy more perfectly, and with perpetual advancement, all the relative charities, and all the reciprocations of amity. Time ſeems, indeed, in this ſublunary ſtate, occaſionally to ſuppreſs ſome of the fineſt moral ſentiments of the heart. But this is only the ſuſpenſion of an energy: And it may be reſtored to its full vigour, whenever the cauſe is renewed, which firſt called it forth into exertion. Of the truth of this opinion, ſo intereſting to our preſent feelings and to all our virtuous wiſhes, we have proofs in the occurrences of this ſtage of our exiſtence. The dear companion of our youth, whom we had forgotten through the lapſe of years, we meet again, by ſome happy incident, with inexpreſſible delight, and find that our attachment not only ſubſiſts without abatement, but manifeſts itſelf with increaſed vivacity. In the world of ſpirits, it is probable that our mental conſtitution will remain unchanged in its eſſential powers, freed from the incumbrances

incumbrances of the fleſh, and progreſſively enlarging its ſphere of action and of enjoyment. And, as the intercourſe of a finite being muſt through all eternity be finite, it may be concluded that gradations will always take place in our moral ſympathies. Nor is partial affection inconſiſtent with general benevolence. It is the center from which myriads of rays may proceed, extending to a wider and wider circumference, as our knowledge increaſes of the intelligent creation of God. For love is of a plaſtic nature, and having a ſelf-generative power, is capable of indefinite augmentation. It is a flame, which becomes more warm and bright to the objects neareſt to it, in proportion to the diffuſion of its luſtre.

In our tender recollections of a departed friend, there ſeems to be ſome anticipation of that refined intercourſe, which we are to enjoy with him hereafter. His infirmities are forgotten; all caprice and jealouſy ceaſe; incidental unkindneſs is done away; and we remember only his virtues and offices of love. With ſuch views of human mortality, when they are well founded (and whenever they are not ſo, it is the fault and wretchedneſs either of ourſelves or of our fellow-creatures) can we with reaſon and juſtice regard it as an evil? May we not rather ſay, with heart-felt exultation, *O death, where is thy ſting, O grave, where*

is thy victory! But alas! we are taught by apoſtolic authority, *that the ſting of death is ſin, and that the ſtrength of ſin is the law.* Moral evil is at once the bane of paſſing life, the bitterneſs of its cloſing moments, and a curſe impending over all our expectations hereafter.

To point out the true ſources of mental depravity:—To explain how it comes to be ſtrictly forbidden by God, and yet ſo far tolerated, as not to be ſuppreſſed by the interpoſition of his ſovereign power:—To evince the wiſdom and goodneſs of this divine ſufferance or negative permiſſion:—And to reconcile it with the juſtice of future condemnation and puniſhment; are ſubjects of momentous concern, both in ſpeculation and in practice.

Moral evil conſiſts in a corruption of the appetites, paſſions, and affections; and in a conſequent perverſion of the will. It is to be regarded, therefore, as a depravation of our nature, and as repugnant to conſcience, reaſon, and the ordinances of our Creator. Hence ſin is ſtiled *the ſting of death*, as the occaſion of its acuteſt ſufferings. And the law is ſaid to be the *ſtrength of ſin*, not only by the penalties it inflicts; but by the folly and guilt, which are attached to the violation of known intereſt and acknowledged duty. We ſhall bring this ſubject moſt clearly and forcibly "home to our

our buſineſs and boſoms," by taking a conciſe view of the moving and of the governing powers of the human mind; of the principles which excite, and of thoſe which are deſtined to regulate our conduct; and of the good or ills, which originate from the uſe or abuſe of the ſeveral faculties implanted in us, and committed to our free direction. In this ſurvey we ſhall aſſuredly find, that *God has made man upright; but that he has himſelf ſought out many wicked inventions.*

The Deity has wiſely furniſhed man with APPETITES, to urge him, at regular ſeaſons, to exertions neceſſary to his growth; to the preſervation of his life and his health; and to the continuance of his ſpecies. With great benignity, alſo, he has annexed agreeable ſenſations to their moderate and proper indulgence; ſo that, according to the ſentiment of an admired poet, whoſe obſervation however has been too often miſapplied, "to enjoy is to obey." But if the gratification of the appetites may be innocent and even laudable, it may likewiſe be made ſubverſive of reaſon, virtue, and religion. Their innocent ſtate ſubſiſts, whilſt they accord with the original intentions of nature. And they become laudable, when there is ſuperadded to the animal pleaſures they produce, complacency of mind, gratitude to the giver of all good, and a diſpoſition to

liberality, friendſhip, and ſocial intercourſe. But notwithſtanding theſe beneficial concomitants, we are ever to remember, that the appetites hold only a low ſtation in the œconomy of our minds; and that the undue indulgence of them, is to ſubſtitute a ſubordinate for a higher good; thus diſturbing the order of nature, and giving to moral evil its fatal commencement. Melancholy is the progreſs of this evil, when habits of licentiouſneſs are eſtabliſhed; when the paſſions are inflamed by intemperance; when the dominion of reaſon is uſurped; and when conſcience becomes *ſeared as with a hot iron.* The dignity of the human character is then debaſed; and the heir of immortality, through his own folly and perverſeneſs, foregoes all expectation of deſerving, and all capacity of enjoying future beatitude. Yet under theſe ſad circumſtances, we have nothing to allege againſt our Maker; but on the contrary ought humbly to addreſs him in the language which Nehemiah has put into the mouth of the Levites; *O Lord thou art juſt, in all that is brought upon us; for thou haſt done right, but we have done wickedly.*

But the IMAGINATION far ſurpaſſes the appetites in dignity and importance. This faculty is of a complex nature, including in the exerciſe of its functions, conception, abſtraction, aſſociation, and invention. And as its

its operations are generally accompanied with vivid emotions, either of a pleaſurable or a painful kind, it powerfully influences the paſſions and the will, and tinctures every occurrence and every purſuit of life with its own colouring of good or evil. That ſuch a power is capable of the nobleſt uſes, or of the moſt dangerous abuſe, needs no laboured proof to evince. Were the mind deſtitute of it, the beauties of nature would be viewed with indifference; taſte and genius, as diſplayed in the fine arts, would be extinct; ſympathy and gratitude would be cold and tranſient impreſſions; ſociety would loſe all its elegant enjoyments; glory and honour would have no exiſtence; patriotiſm would be a term without import; and virtue herſelf would be ſtripped of many animating attractions. Much alſo, very much would the influence of religion be impaired, if diveſted of *hope* that inſpiring principle, which is ſown indeed in faith, but can only ſpring up and flouriſh in the imagination: A principle that enlivens us with the proſpect of *joys unſpeakable and full of glory*; on which we are privileged to meditate, as ſaints and martyrs have heretofore done, though they are ſuch as *the eye hath not ſeen, the ear heard, and it hath not entered into the heart of man fully to conceive.*

Yet

Yet this admirable faculty, ſo fitted to embelliſh and to gladden life, and ſo favourable to moral excellence and genuine piety, requires the moſt ſteady and rigorous controul. The reliſh which it gives for the contemplation of what is harmonious and ſublime in the creation, or of ingenious deſign and ſkilful execution in human agency, may be applied to foſter extravagance and vain oſtentation; or may become an incitement to avarice, envy, and pride. The ſplendor and dignity, or meanneſs and wretchedneſs which ſtrike the fancy on the firſt view of characters, actions, or events, may become the ſource of numberleſs falſe aſſociations: And by theſe the mind may be the dupe of its own illuſions, being reduced to that unhappy ſtate, in which *evil is put for good, and good for evil; bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.* Practical maxims of honour will then be eſtabliſhed on the caprices of faſhion: Revenge will be miſtaken for courage and magnanimity: The ſpirit of perſecution will be eſteemed as pious zeal: And either the fervours of enthuſiaſm, or the chilling gloom of ſuperſtition will take poſſeſſion of the ſoul.

But ſhall the man, who has wilfully brought upon himſelf intellectual darkneſs, impute to God the depravity, to which it gives occaſion? Or ſhall he, like the ſervant in the parable, preſumptuouſly

preſumptuouſly dare to juſtify the neglect and perverſion of the talent committed to his care, by urging, *Lord I knew that thou wert a hard man, reaping where thou haſt not ſown, and gathering where thou haſt not ſtrawed: And I was affraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth. Lo there thou haſt, that is thine!* In righteouſneſs the Lord judged that wicked and ſlothful ſervant by commanding that the *talent ſhould be taken from him, and given to another*; *and that he ſhould be caſt into outer darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.*

With reſpect to the PASSIONS and AFFECTIONS, we are likewiſe to conſider ourſelves, as *ſtewards of the manifold grace of God*; accountable to him, who implanted them, for their uſe or abuſe. Theſe moving powers of the ſoul, though diſtinguiſhed by different appellations, vary only in the degree of emotion or perturbation, with which their energies are accompanied. By their direct impulſe the WILL is incited: And as they become the reflex objects of approbation or diſapprobation, moral agency is thus conſtituted; and virtue or vice, happineſs or miſery, are their inevitable conſequences. It behoves us then ſeriouſly to weigh the good and the evil of this pre-eminent part of our mental frame; that we may not only do juſtice in ſpeculation to the benignant author of it; but that we may practically avoid

avoid the one and attain the other, as far as is compatible with human frailty. In the deſignation of man, two great objects are aſſigned for his attainment—private intereſt, and ſocial happineſs. To theſe ends, every part of his moral and intellectual character bears a remote or an immediate reference. And the œconomy of the mind conſiſts in the due vigour of the perceptive powers which diſcern them; in the juſt balance of the paſſions and affections which urge to their purſuit; in the quickneſs, accuracy, or authority of the moral faculty, which decides on their merit or demerit; in the ſubordination of the will to its deciſions; and in the general ſupremacy of reaſon over the whole mental ſyſtem. The paſſions and affections, being blind impulſes, may harmonize or be diſcordant with each other; be proportionate or diſproportionate to their objects; and good or evil, according to their ends, degrees, and affinities. We muſt remember, alſo, that in the wide and complex ſphere of life, a variety of diſpoſitions is required for individual felicity and public benefit. Ambition, courage, and the love of glory, qualify ſome for command; whilſt gentleneſs, timidity, and the deſire of eaſe, repreſs, in others, all aſpiring views, and fit them only for ſubordination. In one man, the thirſt of knowledge is a prevailing

vailing principle; in another the love of wealth; whilſt a third, indifferent to both, is ardent in the dangers and the toils of war. But beſides theſe ſtrong colourings of minds oppoſed to each other, there are ſhades of diſtinction in the human paſſions, diverſified almoſt to infinity. This regular confuſion, this diſcordant harmony, conſtitutes the beauty and excellence of the ſocial ſtate; and in every community increaſes in an exact *ratio* to the progreſſive advancement of liberty, knowledge, and juſt legiſlation. For as relations, employments, offices, and ranks are multiplied, the connections or colliſions of duty and intereſt are alſo multiplied: And combinations of the principles of action are formed, unknown in the primeval ſtate of man; giving him freſh energies; and caſting his character, as it were, in a new and larger mould. In judging, therefore, of any particular paſſion or affection, we muſt have recourſe to a comprehenſive ſtandard; nor ſhould we ever pronounce the ſentence of its entire condemnation, till we know not only its preciſe force and ſpecific object, but whether it ſerves not alſo as a counterpoiſe to ſome other powerful propenſity in the mental ſyſtem. For it may operate for good, where motives actually virtuous do not ſubſiſt: Thus anger overcomes fear: Indolence reſtrains the immoderate

derate deſire of pleaſure or of wealth: Oſtentation ſuperſedes ſordid parſimony: Luxury ſoftens ferocity of manners: And even Voluptuouſneſs is an antidote to coldneſs and hardneſs of heart. Theſe obſervations muſt not be underſtood to accord with the doctrine that *private vices are public benefits:* A doctrine which is a ſoleciſm in ethics, and plauſible merely from the fallacy of the terms employed in its ſupport. My arguments are only deſigned to evince, that inordinate paſſions are ſometimes happily corrective of each other. And being thus ſuſpended in their exerciſe, the voice of conſcience may be heard, their general tendencies may be diſcerned, and reaſon may reſume her uſurped empire.

But though a ſyſtem thus adapted to obviate its own diſorders marks the benignity and wiſdom of the ſovereign author, yet moral rectitude cannot conſiſt in any balance, produced by the correſpondent exceſs or defect of vicious paſſions. And there are ſome of ſuch extreme turpitude as to be evil, in all their conſequences, to the individual who is ſubjected to them. Yet even theſe will be found to have ſprung from principles innocent and perhaps praiſe-worthy; of which it may be proper to adduce a few examples, by tracing to their origin *avarice*, *envy*, *malice*, and *revenge*.

The

The limits of this inveſtigation forbid a more copious detail.

Avarice is an inordinate paſſion for riches, or a ſtrong attachment to the mere inſtruments and means of good, predominant over, and even ſometimes ſupplanting, all regard to the end itſelf. Comfortable ſubſiſtence; plenty; future proviſion for offspring; the enjoyments of taſte and elegance; the benefits of power or of knowledge; or the exerciſes of hoſpitality, friendſhip, compaſſion, and beneficence, conſtitute thoſe ends, in the attainment of which riches are employed. But though, independently of ſuch ends, they poſſeſs no intrinſic value; yet, by an early aſſociation, which education too much foſters, habit ſtrengthens, and general opinion ſanctions, they acquire an excluſive eſtimation; and become themſelves the objects of unremitting and arduous purſuit.

Under theſe circumſtances, they prove incentives to induſtry, ſkill, and enterprize; qualities, which are confeſſedly both uſeful and laudable. But the deſire of wealth now aſſumes the character either of virtue or of vice, according to the governing principles of action, with which it is combined. If it be the handmaid to ſenſuality, oſtentation, pride, or the luſt of power, it participates in their moral turpitude; as it does in that moral excellence, which, like the apoſtle's, *knows how*

how to abound, if happily in conjunction with it. The ſign, however, may be totally detached from the thing ſignified, and abſtractedly prized on its own account. This abſtraction manifeſts itſelf in the paſſion for thoſe frivoliſms, which are falſely honoured with the name of ſcience: for titles of honour, for badges of diſtinction, and for military glory. But in no inſtance is it ſo remarkable as in the love of money, which in this caſe, is denominated avarice; and when it prevails, debaſes the mind, extinguiſhes the generous affections, and becomes the *root of all evil.*

Envy is that diſpoſition of mind, which is painfully impreſſed by the fame, the fortune, the felicity, or the elevation of a neighbour; and which is gratified by his diſappointment or humiliation. Yet malignant as this principle muſt be deemed, it always ſprings from ill-founded notions of rivalſhip, or falſe views of private intereſt. Self-love ſeeks, and wiſely ſeeks reputation, advancement, and ſucceſs. And theſe, being relative advantages, the ſum of them is eſtimated rather by compariſon than by the preciſe degrees in which they are poſſeſſed. Whenever this compariſon proves unfavourable, a jealous and irritable mind converts it into an occaſion of grudging, or antipathy. And what ought to excite a generous

and

and laudable emulation, is perverted into that ſpurious modification of it, envy.

Malice, pure and unmixed, is a paſſion too diabolical to have exiſtence in the human mind. It always involves the apprehenſion or belief of injury, and is, in ſentiment and purport, a ſpecies of retaliation. Flowing from ſuſpicion, jealouſy, oppoſition of intereſt, or reſentment, it may be regarded as originating in the defenſive principles of action, which are corrupted by too frequent indulgence, by falſe views of human nature, and more eſpecially by the deficiency of countervailing good affections.

Revenge in its eſſence, implicates reſentment; but goes far beyond that reaſonable emotion to which a ſenſe of injury gives riſe, in every ſpirited and generous mind. This ſenſe of injury is regulated by a principle of juſtice: For wrongs, being definite, have their preciſe correſpondent meaſures of indemnification or redreſs: And it is calmed by time, ſoftened by compaſſion, and always diſpoſed to relenting and forgiveneſs. *To be angry and to ſin not,—and to ſuffer not the ſun to go down upon our wrath*, mark the natural, as well as the evangelical limits of a paſſion, which operates with all the utility of a penal ſtatute, and is promulgated in the countenance inſtantly, to warn mankind againſt mutual harm. But

revenge is unbounded anger aſſociated with pride; agonizing under fancied wounds; with hatred of the deepeſt malignity; and with enmity which nothing can appeaſe. Theſe, however, are factitious combinations, of human and not of divine original. They belong not to the conſtitution which the Creator framed in his own image, and are to be regarded as the frenzy of the ſoul. Happily ſuch extreme depravity is of rare occurrence: And I am perſuaded a cloſe inſpection of men's characters would clearly ſhew, that there is a conſiderable predominance of virtue in the world. Every individual may judge, with tolerable accuracy, of the whole by the circle which forms his own private ſphere of action: For it is of ſuch parts that the whole is compoſed. And were vice prevalent, domeſtic peace, mercantile honour, and political order, could not ſubſiſt in the degree, and with the univerſality, which, for ages, have been experienced, in all the civilized parts of the globe. But with the utmoſt liberality of conſtruction, there will ſtill be a large portion of moral evil, both for contrition and for reformation. Who is there, that hath not to lament ſome ſin, which moſt eaſily beſets him? And many, very many, may confeſs with St. Paul, *the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.* Error and infirmity neceſſarily belong to a finite

a finite being, who is here commencing a courſe of diſcipline and improvement, which is to be progreſſive through all eternity. Even in the exalted ſtate, to which we aſpire, in a future world, deviations from rectitude may ſtill incidentally occur. For we have the aſſertion of holy writ "that the angels themſelves are charged with folly, and that there is none perfectly good, ſave God, no not one."

But mercy and loving kindneſs are the attributes of our Creator. *Like as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are duſt.* Let us, therefore, *ſearch and try our ways, and turn again unto him: He will hear our prayer, and will grant his ſalvation. For though the ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law, yet, thanks be to God, the victory, by repentance, will be given us, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS TO A YOUNG CLERGYMAN.

Study.—Pulpit Diſcourſes.—Mode of Compoſition.—Adoption of Scripture Language.—Dangers incidental to the Clerical Profeſſion.—Sunday Schools.—Inſtruction of the Poor *.

I. A FEW days ago, I had a moſt friendly letter from the Biſhop of Llandaff, in which

* Theſe communications are chiefly ſelected from ſome of the author's letters, returned after the death of his ſon.

he mentions you in the following terms; "Your ſon is young enough to make a great "progreſs in oriental literature, if he have "any *peculiar turn* for learning languages; "but without that, I think his time may be "more uſefully employed in other ſtudies*." I not only accord with his lordſhip, but am of opinion, that even with a ſtrong bent towards the attainment of eaſtern learning, your ſituation calls for purſuits of higher dignity and importance; and which are eſſential to one who has the claims of paſtoral duty to fulfil; who is not in a ſtate of independence; and who muſt, in a great meaſure, be the architect of his own fortune. In the converſation, which I enjoyed with you lately, I ſuggeſted the choice of a ſyſtematic ſubject, both of your ſtudies, and of your compoſitions for the pulpit. With this view, I propoſed the human *appetites*, *deſires*, *paſſions*, and *affections*, as peculiarly worthy of your inveſtigation. The analyſis of the mind, and eſpecially of its moving powers, opens the moſt intereſting ſources of knowledge; makes us intimately acquainted with ourſelves; and is eſſential to the acquiſition of influence over others. This moral ſcience enters into every tranſaction of life,

* Conſult Dr. Watſon's Diſcourſe delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Ely, May 1780, on the Study of Oriental Literature.

and

and attaches itſelf alike to our ſolitary and ſocial hours. He, therefore, who would regulate his own conduct, muſt aſcertain the principles on which it ought to be founded; And he whoſe duty it is to direct the conduct of others, muſt be previouſly acquainted with all the mazes of the heart, that he may bring his principles home "to men's buſineſs and boſoms."

I have attempted the ſketch of a ſermon on the uſe and abuſe of the *appetites*, to illuſtrate the mode in which I apprehend the active powers of the mind, may be both ſtudied and applied to your pulpit ſervices, with great improvement to yourſelf, and advantage to your hearers. And when you have completed the whole aſcending ſeries of *deſires*, *paſſions*, and *affections*, ſuch a ſyſtem of practical ethics would be well received by the public; and reflect honour on the exertions, and on the ability of its author. I am ſolicitous that you ſhould have this object in your view. It will add energy to your ſtudies, and give a zeſt to the purſuit of them. And in your preſent retirement, there may be peculiar reaſon to urge to you, in the language of Salluſt, *ſumma ope niti decet ne vitam ſilentio tranſeas.*

II. Your natural diffidence may prove, for ſome time, unfavourable to *animation*, in the delivery of your ſermons: But habit, I hope,

will enable you to overcome it, without ſubverting that modeſty, which is always pleaſing and decorous in the pulpit. I am no admirer of geſticulation, or of ſudden variations either in the tone of the preacher's voice, or in the features of his face. Evangelical doctrines and precepts are of ſuch intrinſic importance, that they need not the aids of artificial eloquence. And a diſcourſe cannot fail to be impreſſive on judicious minds, and even on the vulgar, if well compoſed, pronounced with ſerious dignity, and accompanied with no affected or ungraceful attitudes. Of what length are your ſermons? In a ſhorter ſpace of time than twenty-five or thirty minutes you cannot poſſibly aim at more than declamation. And this, as it informs not the underſtanding, can make only a temporary impreſſion on the heart. A pulpit diſcourſe ſhould enter into the *minutiæ* of its ſubject. For on theſe the regulation of the affections, and the conduct of life moſt intimately depend. At the cloſe of Dr. Birch's Memoirs of Archbiſhop Tillotſon, a ſermon is inſerted, preached at the morning ſervice at Cripplegate, which appears to me a model of uſeful compoſition. The length of it may be deemed exceptionable by a modern audience; but it is eaſy to obviate ſuch an objection by a proper diviſion of the matter;

matter; and by chuſing different texts, ſufficiently appropriate to the ſubject.

In compoſing a diſcourſe, I ſhould recommend to you to form an epitome of it, without any aſſiſtance from books. Chuſe a ſubject, and when you are in the beſt frame of mind for the inveſtigation of it, reflect upon it deliberately, and note down in regular order the introduction, diviſion, general concluſion, and application. This will make the materials ſufficiently your own; and they may afterwards be enlarged, corrected, and improved, by what others have delivered on the ſame topic. In a few years you will be qualified to write entirely from the ſtores of your own mind.

III. When a text is offered to the conſideration of your audience, containing any moral or religious precept, the elucidation of it would often be more clear and impreſſive, by taking a view of its converſe or correlative: And, if I miſtake not, this mode has novelty to recommend it. Thus, for example, the divine command, *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*, can only be well underſtood and ſucceſsfully enforced by aſcertaining what *ſelf-love* ought to be, before it is made the ſtandard of the *love* we are to bear to our *neighbour*. The regulation of our private affections, therefore, and the wiſdom, and impartiality

of our judgments concerning perſonal intereſt, are neceſſary antecedents to a juſt and complete obſervance of this great commandment. The precept, *be ye angry and ſin not*, furniſhes another illuſtration of what I have propoſed. The converſe to *anger* is that *timidity of mind* which invites by ſhrinking from injuries; that *apathy* which is unmoved by moral evil; or that *paſſive obedience*, which while it crouches under the oppreſſion of ſuperiors, meanly tyranniſes over thoſe who are in ſubordinate ſtations. Each of theſe points of contraſt will admit of conſiderable enlargement; and each will illuſtrate the propriety of the apoſtolic injunction, which may afterwards be diſcuſſed with its ſeveral limitations.

Forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.—This text, like the firſt pointed out, *thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf*, includes the correlatives which are to afford reciprocal illuſtration. What is the diſpoſition of mind we are to bear towards thoſe, who have treſpaſſed againſt us, that we may be fit objects of the divine forgiveneſs? We are to indulge no reſentment, which is in the leaſt degree diſproportionate to the injury received; which has not for its object the prevention of future offences; the recovery of an invaded right; the reformation of the offender; and the good

of

of ſociety, which is neceſſarily involved in the redreſs of wrongs, and in the ſecurity of all its members. We are alſo to cultivate a placable ſpirit; to withhold no good offices from him who has injured us, that may not tend to harden him in his tranſgreſſion; and to be forward in promoting his reformation, and our mutual reconciliation. Nor are theſe the ſole antecedents eſſential to our aſking worthily of God, the forgiveneſs of our treſpaſſes. We muſt agreeably to our reaſonable expectations from thoſe who have treſpaſſed againſt us, heartily repent of our offences; reſolve never again to renew them, and make all the reſtitution in our power.

Such is the wide import, and ſo extenſive are the obligations we acknowledge ourſelves to be under, when we adopt the language of our Saviour in prayer, *forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.*

Charity envieth not.—Conſider envy firſt as connected with ambition and the deſire of fortune; ſecondly as connected with emulation and the love of fame; thirdly as ſimple and uncompounded, conſiſting ſolely of the malignant diſpoſition of being gratified with the depreſſion of others, and of repining at their praiſe, at their excellence, and proſperity.—But it is unneceſſary further to multiply examples. Thoſe which have been offered will ſuffice

ſuffice to illuſtrate the mode of moral and ſcriptural inveſtigation recommended to your attention.

IV In the ſermon, which I heard you deliver at St. Anne's church, you urged with truth and energy, the importance of virtue and piety, and the ſufficiency of a good life to eternal ſalvation. In this ſentiment, I am perſuaded, you are fully warranted both by reaſon and ſcripture. But it is oppoſed by certain claſſes of chriſtians; and you engaged in a brief diſcuſſion of their arguments, with a view to evince the groundleſſneſs and abſurdity of them. Such attempts are never likely to be attended with ſucceſs. Direct attacks from the pulpit on any favourite doctrines, tend rather to confirm than to ſubvert the belief of them; becauſe by kindling ſome degree of reſentment, they increaſe attachment and pertinacity. The moſt effectual mode of enlightening the mind, and of correcting falſe opinions, is to communicate what you deem to be truth, as if it were incontrovertible. And whenever inſtruction contradicts the prejudices of the audience, it ſhould be delivered, as much as poſſible, in the language of ſcripture. Indeed it is to be lamented that many terms which involve in them ſubjects of bitter diſpute amongſt chriſtians, thoſe "novelties of words" as Lord Bacon ſtiles them, ſhould have

have been introduced into the public offices of religion. The ſame noble writer, in his Eſſay on Unity of Faith, has well obſerved that "men create to themſelves oppoſitions which "in truth are not, and faſhion and coin them "into new terms, which are ſo fixed and in-"variable, that though the meaning ought to "govern the term, the term governs the "meaning."

V. In recommending to you the adoption of ſcripture language, on points which are controverted, I ought not to omit the cautions ſo judiciouſly ſuggeſted by Dr. Paley; a friend whom I eſteem and venerate, though I have oppoſed ſome of his opinions with a freedom, which I am ſure, from his known candour, ſincerity, and zeal in the inveſtigation of truth, he will not only excuſe, but approve. This excellent writer has ſhewn, that much confuſion, and many falſe doctrines have ariſen from the application of titles, phraſes, propoſitions, and arguments to the perſonal conditions of chriſtians at this day, which were appropriate to chriſtianity on its firſt inſtitution. He, therefore, who undertakes to explain the ſcriptures, before he determines to whom, or to what any particular expreſſion is now referable, ought to weigh well whether it admits of any preſent reference at all; or whether it is not to be reſtrained to the preciſe circumſtances

ſtances or occaſion, on which it was originally delivered. The learned author illuſtrates this important obſervation by ſeveral intereſting examples, which I ſhall briefly recapitulate. At the time when the ſcriptures were promulgated no perſons were baptized but converts, and none being converted but from conviction, a correſponding reformation of life and manners muſt have almoſt uniformly enſued. Hence *baptiſm* was only another term for ſincere *converſion*, which explains our Saviour's promiſe, "*he that believeth, and is baptiſed, ſhall be ſaved*," and alſo his command to St. Paul, "*ariſe, and be baptiſed, and waſh away thy ſins.*" This was that baptiſm for the "*remiſſion of ſins*," to which St. Peter invited the Jews; and that "*waſhing of regeneration*," of which St. Paul writes to Titus. Now when we ſpeak of the baptiſm practiſed in moſt chriſtian churches at preſent, in which converſion is neither ſuppoſed nor poſſible, it is manifeſt that theſe expreſſions, if ever allowable, ought to be applied with extreme qualification and reſerve. The community of chriſtians were at firſt a handful of men, ſtrictly united amongſt themſelves and divided from the reſt of the world, by a difference of principle and perſuaſion, by ſuperior purity of life and converſation, and by many peculiarities of worſhip and behaviour. Hence they were denominated

nated by diſtinguiſhed titles, being called the "*elect, ſaints, a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.*" Theſe titles by a ſtrange miſapplication, injurious to our holy religion, have been appropriated to certain individuals or parties amongſt chriſtians, exiſting at this time. The converſion of a grown perſon from heatheniſm to chriſtianity was a change of which we have now no juſt conception. It was a new name, a new language, a new ſociety, a new faith, a new hope, a new object of worſhip, and a new rule of life. A hiſtory was diſcloſed full of diſcovery and ſurpriſe: A proſpect of futurity was unfolded, beyond imagination awful and auguſt. This converſion, being alſo accompanied with the pardon of paſt ſins, became ſuch an æra in a man's life, ſo remarkable a period in his recollection, ſuch a revolution of every thing which was moſt important to him, as might well admit the ſtrong figures, and ſignificant alluſions by which it is deſcribed in ſcripture. It was "*a regeneration, or new birth*;" it was "*to be born again of God and the ſpirit*;" it was "*to be dead to ſin.*" But a perſon, educated in a chriſtian country, can experience no change equal or ſimilar to the converſion of a heathen to the religion of Jeſus. Yet we ſtill retain the ſame language; and ſome amongſt us have imagined to themſelves certain perceptible

ceptible impulſes of the Holy Ghoſt, by which in an inſtant, they, who were before "*the children of wrath*," *are regenerate and born of the ſpirit*; *becoming new creatures, and the ſons of God**.

I cannot refer you to the excellent diſcourſe of Dr. Paley, which I have thus epitomized, without warmly recommending to your peruſal another, by the ſame learned author, preached before the univerſity of Cambridge, *on the dangers incidental to the clerical character*. The ſermon is now before me, and as no opportunity will offer, till next year, of tranſmitting it to you, I will give you an abridged view of it.

VI. The text is moſt happily appropriate, *Leſt that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myſelf ſhould be a caſt away*, 1 Corinth. chap. ix. ver. 27. He who felt this deep ſolicitude for the fate of his ſpiritual intereſts, and the perſuaſion that his acceptance with God muſt depend upon the care and exactneſs with which he regulated his own paſſions, and his own conduct, was one, who from his zeal in the cauſe of religion, from the ardour of his preaching, from his ſufferings, or his ſucceſs might have hoped (if ſuch hope were in any caſe admiſſible) for ſome excuſe for indul-

* See Dr. Paley's ſermon, entitled, Caution recommended in the Uſe and Application of Scripture Language.

gence,

gence, and ſome licenſe for gratifications forbidden to others. Yet the apoſtle appears to have known, and by his knowledge inſtructs us, that no exertion of induſtry, no diſplay of talents, no public merit, however exalted, will compenſate for the neglect of perſonal ſelf-government. This is an important leſſon to all, and to none more applicable than to the teachers of religion. For the human mind is prone, almoſt beyond reſiſtance, to ſink the weakneſs or the irregularities of private character in the view of public ſervices; and this propenſity is not only ſtrongeſt in a man's own caſe, but prevails more powerfully in religion than in other ſubjects, from its cloſe connection with the higher intereſts of human nature.

With many peculiar motives to virtue, and means of improvement in it, a miniſter of the goſpel has obſtacles preſented to his progreſs, which require a diſtinct and poſitive effort of the mind to ſurmount. Amongſt theſe impediments, I ſhall mention, in the firſt place, the inſenſibility to religious impreſſions, which a conſtant converſation with religious ſubjects, and ſtill more a conſtant intermixture with religious offices is wont to induce. For ſuch is the frame of the human conſtitution, that whilſt all active habits are facilitated and ſtrengthened by repetition, impreſſions under which we are paſſive are weakened and diminiſhed.

niſhed. What then is to be done? It is by an effort of reflection, by an active exertion of the mind; by knowing the force of this tendency, and by ſetting himſelf expreſsly to reſiſt it, that he is to repair the decays of ſpontaneous piety. He is to affiſt his ſenſitive by his rational nature; and to obviate his infirmities by a deeper ſenſe of the obligations under which he lies; and by a more frequent, and diſtinct recollection of the reaſons upon which that obligation is founded.

The principle here pointed out extends, alſo, to the influence which argument itſelf poſſeſſes upon the underſtanding, or at leaſt to the influence it poſſeſſes in determining the will. For the force of every argument is diminiſhed by triteneſs and familiarity. The intrinſic value, indeed, muſt be the ſame; but the impreſſion may be very different.

But a clergyman has an additional diſadvantage to contend with. The conſequence of repetition will be felt more ſenſibly by him, who is in the habit of directing his arguments to others: For it always requires a ſeparate and unuſual effort of the mind to bring back the concluſion upon himſelf. In morals and religion the powers of perſuaſion are cultivated by thoſe, whoſe employment is public inſtruction; but their wiſhes are fulfilled, and their cares exhauſted in promoting the ſucceſs

of

of their endeavours upon others. The ſecret duty of turning truly and in earneſt their attention upon themſelves is ſuſpended, not to ſay forgotten amidſt the labours, the engagements, the popularity of their public miniſtry; and in the beſt diſpoſed minds is interrupted by the anxiety, or even the ſatisfaction with which their public ſervices are performed.

Theſe evils incidental to his profeſſion are often augmented, alſo, by his own imprudence. In his deſire to convince, he is extremely apt to *overſtate* his arguments. Such zeal generally I believe, defeats its own purpoſe even with thoſe whom he addreſſes; but it always deſtroys the efficacy of the argument upon himſelf. He is conſcious of his exaggeration, whether his hearers perceive it or not; and this conſciouſneſs corrupts the whole influence of the concluſion, robbing it even of its juſt value. It may not be quite the ſame thing to overſtate a true reaſon, and to advance a falſe one; but in the former caſe there is aſſuredly a want of candour, which approaches almoſt to a want of veracity.

If dangers to a clergyman's moral, and religious character accompany the exerciſe of his public miniſtry, they no leſs attend upon the nature of his profeſſional ſtudies. It has been ſaid, that literary trifling upon the ſcriptures

has a tendency, above all other employments, to harden the heart. This obſervation is not applied to reprove the exerciſe, to check the freedom, or to queſtion the utility of biblical reſearches. But the critic and the commentator do not always proceed with the reflection, that if theſe things be true, if this book do indeed convey to us the will of God, it is not only to be ſtudied and criticiſed, but to be obeyed and acted upon. However ſedulouſly, and however ſucceſsfully they may have cultivated religious ſtudies; yet a more arduous, perhaps a new, and it may be a painful work, which the public eye ſees not, which no public favour will reward, remains to be attempted; that of inſtituting an examination of the heart, and of the moral conduct; of altering the ſecret courſe of behaviour; of reducing its deviations to a conformity with thoſe rules of life delivered in the holy ſcriptures, which if deemed of ſufficient importance to deſerve to be ſeriouſly ſtudied, ought, for reaſons infinitely more momentous, to command uniform and full obedience.

A turn of thinking has of late become very general amongſt the higher claſſes of the community, amongſt all who occupy ſtations of authority, and, in common with theſe, amongſt the clergy, which deſerves to be particularly noticed: What I refer to, is the performance of

of our religious offices for the ſake of *ſetting an example to others*; and the allowing this motive ſo to take poſſeſſion of the mind, as to ſubſtitute itſelf in the place of the proper ground and reaſon of the duty. Whenever this is the caſe, it becomes not only a cold and extraneous, but a falſe and unreaſonable principle of action. There muſt be ſome reaſon for every duty, beſides example, or there can be no ſufficient reaſon for it at all. To ſuffer, therefore, a ſecondary conſideration to exclude the primary and more important one is a perverſion of the judgment, the effect of which in the offices of religion is utterly to deſtroy their religious quality; to rob them of that which conſtitutes their nature and their ſpirituality. They who would ſet an *example* to others of worſhip and devotion, in truth perform neither themſelves. Idle or proud ſpectators of the ſcene, they vouchſafe their preſence in our aſſemblies, for the edification, it ſeems, and benefit of others; but as if they had no ſins of their own to deplore, no mercies to acknowledge, no pardon to entreat. Becauſe we find it convenient to ourſelves, that thoſe about us ſhould be religious; or becauſe it is uſeful to the ſtate, that religion ſhould be upheld in the country:—to join from theſe motives in the public ordinances of the church, however adviſable it may be as

a branch of ſecular prudence, is not either to fulfil our Lord's precept, or to perform any religious ſervice. Religion can only ſpring from its own principle. Believing our ſalvation to be involved in the faithful diſcharge of our religious, as well as moral duties; experiencing the warmth, the conſolation, the virtuous energy which every act of true devotion communicates to the heart, and how much theſe effects are heightened by conſent and ſympathy; loving, and therefore ſeeking the immortal welfare of our neighbour, we unite with him in acts of ſocial homage to our Maker: Prompted by theſe ſentiments our worſhip is, what it ought to be, exemplary, yet our own, and not the leſs perſonal for being public.

If what has been ſtated concerning example be true; if the conſideration of it be liable to be miſapplied, no perſons can be more in danger of falling into the miſtake, than they who are taught to regard themſelves as the examples, as well as inſtructors of their flocks. It is neceſſary they ſhould be admoniſhed particularly to remember that in their religious offices, they have not only to pronounce, to excite, to conduct the devotion of their congregations, but to pay to God, the adoration which every individual owes to him; and whilſt

whilſt they are exerting themſelves for others, not to neglect the ſalvation of their own ſouls."

In theſe excellent and judicious remarks of Dr. Paley, you will recogniſe ſeveral particulars advanced by David Hume, in the reprobated charge againſt the clergy, delivered in the firſt note to his Eſſay on National Characters. He has there carried every point to the extreme, in order to diſparage a profeſſion, to which he appears to have been extremely inimical. But the adage *fas eſt et ab hoſte doceri* may be recommended to you on this occaſion; and, after reading the epitome I have juſt drawn, I wiſh you to conſult, and to peruſe with attention the note to which I have referred. There is certainly ſome truth, though mixed with great exaggeration, in each of the accuſations Mr. Hume has brought againſt the ſacerdotal character. And to become fully appriſed of the *evil, which moſt eaſily beſets us*, is eſſential to the ſucceſs of our efforts in guarding againſt it. To the following remark I would eſpecially direct your attention. "Though all mankind have a ſtrong propenſity to religion, at certain times and in certain diſpoſitions; yet there are few or none who have it to that degree, or with that conſtancy, which is requiſite to this profeſſion. It muſt therefore happen that clergymen, being drawn from the common maſs of

mankind as people are to other employments, by the views of profit, the greater part will find it neceſſary, on particular occaſions, to *feign* more devotion than they are at that time poſſeſſed of, and to maintain the appearance of fervour and ſerioufneſs even when jaded with the exerciſes of their religion, or when they have their minds engaged in the common occupations of life."

The ſpirit of devotion cannot be uniformly the ſame, even in the beſt conſtituted minds, at all ſeaſons and under all circumſtances. But though temporary abatement of fervour may be excuſable, a miniſter, when engaged in the public ſervices of the church, ought never to loſe the impreſſion of the awful preſence in which he ſtands, nor the power of commanding his thoughts, by recalling them to a conſideration of the majeſty of the Almighty Being whom he addreſſes. Abſence of mind, indeed, does not deſerve the imputation, charged upon it by Mr. Hume, of grimace and hypocriſy, yet it muſt be regarded as an inſult to God *to draw near to him with the lips, whilſt the heart is far from him:* And religious apathy will inevitably enſue from its frequent recurrence.

VII. You took much pains, at St. John's church, to diſplay the advantages of Sunday ſchools. It would afford me ſincere ſatisfaction

tion to hear that you are engaged in the ſuperintendence of one at Winwick. The plan of inſtruction ſhould be confined to moral and religious duties purely practical, and to the undiſputed doctrines of chriſtianity. To qualify for the active offices of life, and to form peaceable, diligent, virtuous, and pious citizens, ought to be the ſole objects of ſuch inſtitutions. Theſe muſt be accompliſhed by impreſſing the minds of children with ſuch primary and comprehenſive principles, as extend to all ſituations and conjunctures. In the compoſition of prayers for Sunday ſchool children, I have remarked a general want of attention to the obligation and feelings of *gratitude*. This incenſe of the heart conſtitutes the nobleſt and moſt eſſential part of devotion; and may be called forth, with no inconſiderable degree of fervour, in very young minds, by a judicious, and animated enumeration of the bleſſings conferred upon them. But whilſt gratitude is omitted, ſtrong expreſſions of contrition and remorſe are almoſt conſtantly introduced into the pious exerciſes of children. In theſe they ought to find no place, becauſe they imply a ſenſe of habitual guilt, which cannot be experienced at an early period of life; and utterance is thus given to a ſolemn falſehood. Yet there are ſpecial occaſions, as on the acknowledged commiſ-

ſion of ſome heinous offence, that ſeem to require ſuch an appropriate ſervice, as might heighten compunction, give weight to admonition, and confirm the good impreſſions which have been made.

You very forcibly deſcanted on the ſenſe we ought to entertain of the good offices of the poor*; "to whoſe ſkill and exertions, under God, we are indebted for the leiſure we enjoy, for the habitations in which we dwell, for the raiment with which we are clothed, for the plentiful repaſts of our table, and above all for our advancement in moral, and intellectual excellence. Theſe benefits are far above ordinary wages, or pecuniary appreciation; and therefore the claim of gratitude goes beyond them, and ſhould induce us to extend to our inferiors, as much as is practicable and conſiſtent with the courſe of things, a portion of the comforts and improvements which we, through their means, poſſeſs. The value of money is factitious not real. Strip the mighty lord of his vaſſals, and all his rich demeſnes become a wilderneſs. For every morſel of bread we eat, we are obliged

* Large extracts are here given from this diſcourſe, now ſent from St. Peterſburgh, rather than the original ſhort view of the heads as ſuggeſted by memory, becauſe it is preſumed that both the ſubject and the matter of it will be intereſting to the reader.

to

to a ſubdiviſion of labour, which almoſt exceeds computation or belief. And without artificers thus employed, all the gold of Peru could not procure for us the ſuſtenance of a ſingle meal. It is to be feared theſe conſiderations, and the grateful diſpoſition of mind reſulting from them, are little cheriſhed by men in affluence and power: And yet they are calculated to afford them heart-felt ſatisfaction, and to adorn their characters with true dignity and honour. Gratitude thus exemplified in beneficent acts towards the inſtruments of God, for our good, is gratitude to him the original giver of every good gift."

You alſo pointed out the claims which the poor have to our attention and aſſiſtance on the principle of juſtice. "Shall the fruits of the earth be withheld from him, by the ſweat of whoſe brow they are ſo amply procured? If it be the equitable command of God to the Jew, *thou ſhalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn*, it is aſſuredly not leſs inconſiſtent with the chriſtian law of rectitude, that our fellow-creatures ſhould toil for our ſupport and enjoyment, without a meet participation in the bleſſings thus obtained. That *the labourer is worthy*, and not to be defrauded, *of his hire* is a precept, which comprehends only a ſmall part of the debt we owe to him. The health he conſumes, the hardſhips

hardſhips he undergoes, and the good-will he manifeſts in our ſervice, demand our compaſſion in his ſickneſs, our relief in his poverty and old age, and our tender attention to his intereſts and happineſs. Of this intereſt and happineſs, his ſpiritual welfare forms an eſſential conſtituent. Juſtice, therefore, calls upon us to promote it, by allowing him ſufficient leiſure from his ordinary occupations to avail himſelf of the privileges of his rational and moral nature, and to work out, through divine aſſiſtance, his own ſalvation."

This important conſideration led you in the third place to ſuggeſt, "that a grateful and equitable attention to the poor is to co-operate with Providence in that order of things, which his wiſdom and goodneſs hath eſtabliſhed. For though a diſtinction of ranks is neceſſary to the exiſtence of well-regulated ſociety, yet this diſtinction has its origin in talents, in virtue, and in knowledge. Wealth, power, and greatneſs are but *effects*, the *cauſes* of which are to be ſought for in the human mind. And in every orderly community where art is foſtered, genius allowed full ſcope, and induſtry ſecure in its acquiſitions, one unceaſing movement upwards may be obſerved through the great ſcale of life. It is conſonant both to wiſdom and to duty to promote this aſpiring diſpoſition; which is equally favourable

able to private happineſs, and to national proſperity. And education furniſhes the true means of accompliſhing a purpoſe ſo noble and beneficial. Capacity is confined to no ſtation; and exiſts under all thoſe modifications and degrees, which the diverſified conditions and neceſſities of man require. It ſhould be diligently ſearched for amongſt the children of the poor, ſhould be cultivated wherever found, and directed with care and judgment to its proper object."

In this part of your diſcourſe, the objections ſhould have been obviated, which many well diſpoſed perſons have entertained againſt the extenſion of even the ſubordinate branches of ſchool-learning to the children of the poor. For you might have clearly ſhewn how favourable reading, writing, and arithmetic are not only to ſkill and advancement in the arts, but to ſubordination, peaceableneſs, ſobriety and honeſty. Our excellent friend Dr. Haygarth, in his *Report of the State of the Blue-coat Hoſpital* in Cheſter, well obſerves, "a ſtrange "and pernicious prejudice has too generally "prevailed againſt educating the children of "the poor, ſo as to check the beneficence of "the charitable and humane. Some have "abſurdly maintained, that the moſt ignorant "are the moſt virtuous, happy, and uſeful "part of mankind. It is aſtoniſhing what injurious

" injurious influence this doctrine has had, " though ſo contrary to common ſenſe and " common obſervation. Let any one recol- " lect the character of bricklayers, joiners, " ſhoe-makers, and other mechanics, as well " as of domeſtic ſervants, and he will certainly " diſcover, that the moſt honeſt, ſober, in- " duſtrious, and uſeful both to their own " families and the public, are thoſe who have " been accuſtomed to attend divine ſervice, " and who were inſtructed, when young, in " moral principles, reading, writing, and ac- " compts."

Erneſt, the pious duke of Saxe-Gotha, is ſaid by M. Hirzel, in his Rural Socrates, to have entirely changed the face of his principality, no more than a century ago, by having his people inſtructed in every kind of uſeful knowledge, compendiums of which were put into the hands of the peaſants in all country ſchools. And though theſe conſtitutions do not now exiſt in their original vigour, yet it is amazing to obſerve the difference which ſubſiſts between the inhabitants of this, and of other German circles more neglected. The ſame intelligent writer relates, that the Swiſs peaſants were invited to attend the meetings of the Phyſical Society at Zurich; when each was called upon to give an account of his mode of huſbandry, and received from the ſociety

ſociety encouragement and inſtruction. It is provided by law in Scotland, that there ſhall be a ſchool eſtabliſhed, and a maſter appointed in every pariſh. Many additional ſchools are alſo founded by donation and legacies, ſo that in the ſouthern parts of Scotland, it is very rare, ſays Mr. Howard, to meet with any perſon who cannot both read and write: And it is deemed ſcandalous not to be poſſeſſed of a Bible. The Highland ſociety, for propagating chriſtian knowledge, have ſtated that about ſeven thouſand poor children are inſtructed, in their northern ſchools, in reading, writing, arithmetic, the uſeful arts, and in the principles of religion. "Would you prevent "crimes, take all poſſible means to enlighten "the people," obſerves Catherine the ſecond, empreſs of Ruſſia, in the inſtructions for a code of laws for her extenſive empire, which ſhe herſelf compoſed. And the Duke de Liancourt, in his comparative view of mild and ſanguinary laws, has confirmed this maxim by the following important facts. Scotland, where education is more general than in any other country of Europe, is leaſt degraded by crimes. The tables, given in the works of Mr. Howard, ſhew that fifty-eight priſoners only have been condemned to death in the ſpace of twenty years in that country, whoſe population amounts to at leaſt one million

million ſix hundred thouſand ſouls, an average of ſcarcely three in each year: Whilſt, during the ſame period, four hundred and thirty-four have been condemed to death in the circuit of Norfolk in England, comprehending ſix counties, whoſe population can hardly be eſtimated at more than eight hundred thouſand perſons; which makes an annual average of ſixty-ſix capital convicts, beſides eight hundred and ſeventy-four ſentenced to tranſportation.

I ſhall now ſend you the outlines of a diſcourſe on the appetites, which I before announced to you; and ſhall be anxious to ſee your improvement and completion of it.

SKETCH OF A DISCOURSE ON THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE APPETITES.

1 Cor. x. 31.

ILLUSTRATE the wiſdom and goodneſs of Divine Providence in furniſhing man with appetites, to urge him at regular ſeaſons, to uſe the neceſſary means to ſupport his growth, his health, and his life. His reaſoning powers are ill adapted to theſe ends, without the impulſe of inſtinct. Appetite defined. Returns periodically, when nature calls for ſupplies; and ceaſes when ſatisfied with its object. Is attended with pleaſurable ſenſations; and its gratification

gratification may be innocent, laudable, or ſubverſive of reaſon, religion, and virtue.

Conſider the ſubject under each of the following heads.

I. The innocent ſtate of the appetites implies the indulgence of them according to the ſimplicity, and original intention of nature. They are indications of vigorous health; exerciſe and labour give a zeſt to them; and only when corrupted, they urge to gluttony, ſenſuality, or drunkenneſs. Here the ſituation of our firſt parents in paradiſe may be deſcribed.

"When Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd
"For dinner ſavoury fruits, of taſte to pleaſe
"True appetite, and not diſreliſh thirſt
"Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky ſtream,
"Berry, or grape." Par. Loſt, B. V. l. 305.

II. The indulgence of the appetites may be laudable, when the gratification excites complacency of mind; gratitude to the giver of all good; and that diſpoſition to communicate, to which the term hoſpitality may not improperly be applied: "Let us eat and drink to the glory of God," both the philoſopher and the chriſtian may exclaim; for it is not merely a corporeal, but a mental pleaſure: It is a hymn of praiſe to God, an act of ſocial love to man. It is the feaſt of reaſon and the flow of ſoul. But beware in the midſt of convivial

vivial enjoyments. Say to the overflowing of the heart, *hitherto ſhalt thou go, and no farther.* For the boundary of temperance being once paſſed, the rational is degraded into the brutal nature; and appetite may become the habitual pander of folly and of vice. This conſideration will lead to the third head of the diſcourſe, under which the evils of gluttony, ſenſuality, and drunkenneſs may be ſeverally diſcuſſed.

III. GLUTTONY, or exceſſive eating, is injurious to health; ſtupefies the mind; and creates that habitual heavineſs and languor, which unfit a man for the active buſineſs of life. Hence Solomon has denounced, Prov. xxiii. 23. that *the glutton ſhall come to poverty, and drowſineſs ſhall clothe a man with rags.* The extremes of this vice are too diſguſting and odious to require to be dwelt upon for animadverſion: But leſſer degrees of it are too often found amongſt perſons of every rank in life. The cravings of undepraved appetite are moderate, and ſoon appeaſed; and we ſhould be careful not to go beyond nature in the indulgence of them. Habits of eating much are eaſily induced. And theſe cannot be regarded as innocent, becauſe they are a waſte of the bounties of Providence; and unfavourable both to bodily and mental vigour.

But SENSUALITY is more dangerous, becauſe more ſeductive than gluttony. It refines and renders

renders exquiſite the pleaſures of eating and drinking; and if it do not oppreſs and ſtupefy ſo much, it enervates and even vitiates the mind in a greater degree than ſimple exceſs. It occupies a large portion of time, and devotes it to very ignoble purpoſes; and this charge applies both to the perſons who indulge, and to thoſe who make preparations for the indulgence. It precludes the purſuit of higher enjoyments, and the exerciſe of eſſential duties. It occaſions a wanton deſtruction of numberleſs creatures, whoſe exiſtence is a bleſſing beſtowed by heaven as a mean of felicity to themſelves; and to be appropriated to the uſe, but not the tyranny, the cruelty, and the abuſe of man. This tyranny, cruelty, and abuſe are extended not only to the deſtruction of life, but to the making death itſelf lingering, and full of torture, that our viands may be more delicious to the ſickly and depraved palate.

Caution againſt the too prevalent faſhion of diſcourſing ſo much on the delicacies of the table, and the pleaſures of eating and drinking. *Who is a wiſe man and endued with knowledge among you, let him ſhow out of a good converſation his works with meekneſs of wiſdom.* James iii. 13. Notice alſo the factitious appetite for tobacco, ſnuff, &c. which when moderately indulged may add to the in-

nocent enjoyments of life; but are often carried to an exceſs that may almoſt be deemed criminal.

But neither the groſſneſs of gluttony, nor the refinements of ſenſuality are evils of ſuch magnitude as DRUNKENNESS. This involves in it the ſame loſs of time, of fortune, and of health, and is moreover a direct incentive to profaneneſs, anger, revenge, and other criminal paſſions. It may be divided into two ſpecies; ſottiſhneſs, and ſocial intoxication. The former is connected with the meanneſs and ſtupefaction of gluttony; but ſuperadds a diſpoſition to quarrelling: And a thirſt for ſtrong liquors, when privately indulged, is more violent and unremitting even than voracious hunger.

Convivial ebriety diffuſes widely its miſchiefs. It continually lays ſnares for the unwary; ſeduces thoughtleſs youth; and plants a corrupter in every neighbourhood. For he who delights in ſcenes of intoxication, muſt ſedulouſly ſeek for companions in his guilt. Warn ſuch an one of the ſpreading miſchiefs he occaſions. Tell him that though, from the peculiar felicity of his conſtitution and circumſtances, neither his health, his family, nor his fortune may immediately ſuffer from his intemperance, the caſe will be far otherwiſe with thoſe whom he tempts to aſſociate in his exceſs:

exceſs: And that he is anſwerable for the bad influence of his example; for the corruption of his converſation; for every neglect of duty; and for every criminal act which the poiſon he diſpenſes, with ſuch miſguided liberality, may occaſion: And that though his own vigour may, for many years, ſecure him againſt the conſequences of exceſs; though his fortune may be too affluent to be impaired by riot; *though his heart cheer him in the days of his youth; and he walks in the ways of his heart and the ſight of his eyes; yet for all theſe things God will bring him into judgment.* Eccles. xi. 10.

From what has been delivered it will appear, that the appetites form an eſſential part of our conſtitution; that the indulgence of them is accompanied with pleaſurable ſenſations, to increaſe our enjoyments, and to render us more attentive to their calls; and that this indulgence is not only innocent, but laudable, if it exerciſe ſelf-government; if it be made ſubſervient to the higher powers of our nature; and if it be aſſociated with, and give energy to liberality, benevolence, and hoſpitality. But on the other hand, that gluttony degrades us to a level with the brutes; that ſenſuality enervates the frame, deadens the moral and intellectual powers; and that of drunkenneſs, it is ſaid by the wiſeſt of men,

Proverbs xxiii. 29. *Who hath woe? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cauſe? who hath redneſs of eyes? they that tarry long at the wine; they that go to ſeek mixt wine.*

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE SAME.

Evidences of Chriſtianity.—David Hume.—Love of Truth.—Religious Controverſy.

I HAVE lately received from the Rev. Dr. Elrington, one of the Senior Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, the very obliging preſent of his Sermons, *on the Evidences of Chriſtianity**. During the peruſal of theſe moſt excellent diſcourſes, I was forcibly ſtruck with the idea, that a ſeries of lectures on the truth of the goſpel diſpenſation, confined to the ſpecial proofs of its importance and authenticity, as they ſubſiſt in *modern times*, would be highly popular, and peculiarly adapted to the religious apathy which now prevails in the world. The proofs to which I allude, might

* Theſe diſcourſes treat on the Evidences of Chriſtianity, derived from MIRACLES, and were the firſt delivered at the Donnellan Lectures, an inſtitution eſtabliſhed in the univerſity of Dublin in 1794, ſimilar to the Bampton Lectures at Oxford. The ſecond ſeries of ſermons, on PROPHECIES, was preached by the Rev. W. Magee, B. D. And as much may be reaſonably expected from his diſtinguiſhed learning, induſtry, and eloquence, it is hoped they will ſpeedily be publiſhed.

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be ſhewn to be more cogent, in ſome reſpects, even than thoſe which occurred at the period of the *firſt promulgation of chriſtianity*. I have attempted to arrange them in the following ſketch, as they might probably offer themſelves to a ſerious and diligent inquirer.

I. Men have now a more comprehenſive knowledge of the political, moral, and religious ſtate of the world, than could have been attained at the time of the miſſion of Jeſus Chriſt. The evidence, therefore, of the utility and neceſſity of ſuch a diſpenſation of Providence is rendered proportionally more complete.

II. The art of printing, and the general circulation of books, have diffuſed the knowledge of whatever relates to the firſt eſtabliſhment of the chriſtian religion. We have, conſequently, the fulleſt hiſtorical teſtimony of its happy influence on thoſe who were converts to it, both with reſpect to ſound theiſm and moral conduct. This teſtimony required the lapſe of centuries for its entire confirmation; and increaſes in its force by being viewed as a whole, rather than in particular ſucceſſive details. Even the darkneſs and corruption which enſued in after ages, may be regarded as additional evidence, hidden from the firſt believers, and derived from the page of hiſtory. For the reign of anti-

chriſt was foretold by our Saviour and his apoſtles, at a period when the prediction could have no foundation in probable conjecture.

III. The miracles which Chriſt and his apoſtles performed, however convincing and ſatisfactory to the beholder, could have been admitted comparatively by few on the evidence of perſonal obſervation: We are, therefore, now nearly in the ſame circumſtances, as to the authority of teſtimony, with thoſe to whom they were related; but with this ſuperior advantage, that we can fully appreciate the collective, as well as the ſeparate weight of the reſpective witneſſes. With the whole hiſtory of many of theſe witneſſes we are at this time completely acquainted; and are aſſured of the faithfulneſs and accuracy of their atteſtations by the purity of their morals, by their freedom from ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm, by their ſacrifice of every worldly intereſt, and by the ſufferings and death which they endured in ſupport of the truth.

IV. The miracles themſelves may now be better uuderſtood, both as to their nature, magnitude, and object, than they could have been at the time when they were wrought. Thus the ſuppoſed diſpoſſeſſion of demons was aſcribed by the Jews to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils; whereas we are well aſſured it was the cure of natural diſeaſes, ſuch as *mania*, *melancholia*, and epilepſy. And that

confidence

confidence in the power of magic, or the agency of ſubordinate ſpirits, which rendered the Greeks and Romans leſs ſenſible to the divine authority of the great works performed by Jeſus and his apoſtles, is at this time entirely ſuperſeded. The reſtoration of ſight to the blind man, as related by St. Mark viii. 23. muſt appear, to one verſed in the ſcience of viſion, a higher effect of the interpoſition of the Deity, becauſe more extenſive in its operation, than to a Jew or Heathen ignorant of modern optical diſcoveries. The exact coincidence in the relation of it, alſo, with what is now known, but was then unknown, furniſhes to the candid inquirer of theſe days a proof of its authenticity peculiarly forcible And philoſophy may hereafter become more and more, what it always ought to be, the hand-maid to religion, by rendering natural truths ſubſervient to divine truth.

V. Scripture criticiſm, of late ſo ſedulouſly and ſo ſucceſsfully cultivated, has furniſhed a large additional ſtock of evidence in ſupport of divine revelation, unknown when it was firſt promulgated.

VI. The doctrines, religious and moral, which are taught in the ſcriptures, in many points were equally adverſe to the opinions and the prejudices both of the Jews and of the Gentiles. But the attributes of God, the

pardon of ſin on repentance, a future ſtate of retribution, the duties of forgiving injuries, of loving our enemies, of humility, &c. are now admitted on the authority of improved reaſon, as well as on that of revelation: And the evangelical code has been found, by long experience, to be ſo replete with wiſdom, and ſo conſonant to the beſt intereſts of mankind, as to evince that it is worthy of miraculous interpoſition, and that it comes from God.

VII. From the religion of Mahomet, the mode of its propagation, the character of that impoſtor, and a compariſon of the doctrine and precepts of the goſpel with thoſe of the Koran, many cogent though indirect arguments may be adduced in favour of the divine origin of chriſtianity.

VIII. The progreſſive fulfilment of various prophecies, in the Old and New Teſtament, conſtitutes a ſeries of permanent miracles, open to the obſervation of all mankind, and augmenting the weight of teſtimony almoſt in exact proportion to the lapſe of time ſince the promulgation of chriſtianity. And the full proofs which we now enjoy of this divine communication, as poſſeſſed by the author of our religion, furniſh a clear preſumptive evidence in favour of his other ſupernatural powers. For he who was gifted to foretel the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, the diſperſion of the Jews, and

and various ſubſequent events, has aſſuredly evinced his claim to our belief that he raiſed Lazarus from the dead, and that he is himſelf become *the firſt fruits of them who ſlept*.

The foregoing propoſitions I have communicated to Dr. Elrington. But whilſt I am now writing, ſome additions preſent themſelves to my mind, which I will note down, though perhaps they may be comprehended partly under the heads already advanced.

IX. The rapid progreſs of chriſtianity in Judea, Aſia Minor, Greece, and Italy, ſoon after its promulgation, under various circumſtances adverſe to its adoption, powerfully evinces its foundation in truth, and its divine ſupport. For it ſhould be remembered that the Jews had rooted preconceptions of a Meſſiah, who was to come inveſted with temporal power and preeminence, to reſcue them from Roman uſurpation, and to elevate their country to rank and ſplendour. A crucified Jeſus was, therefore, to them *a ſtumbling block*; as *to the Greeks*, and the reſt of the heathen world, it was *fooliſhneſs*. The Jews alſo were held above all other nations in ſuch utter contempt, that an inſtitution, firſt publiſhed amongſt them, could not, in the ordinary courſe of things, be received without prejudice or averſion. And it ſhould be further remarked that this inſtitution oppoſed itſelf to all their tenets in religion,

religion, to many of their darling maxims of morality, and exacted a purity of heart and life, wholly incompatible with the corruptions which univerſally prevailed. The hiſtory of the firſt ages of the chriſtian church places this argument in a light peculiarly ſtriking to one who now ſtudies the evidences of chriſtianity. And the progreſſive change and melioration of manners, to which our holy religion has given riſe, may be regarded as a further proof time has opened to our view of its divine original.

X. The goſpel was at firſt preached chiefly to the poor and illiterate. By degrees it excited the attention, and forced the conviction of the wiſe and the learned: And in the courſe of time, the moſt diſtinguiſhed characters for extenſive knowledge, ſound judgment, and profound reaſoning have been its profeſſed votaries. Now though authority ought not to *govern* the mind in religious faith; yet it may juſtly be allowed to *influence* the modeſt inquirer into truth, not to be ſatisfied with ſlight or ſuperficial objections, but to weigh, with care and attention, evidences which have been ſanctioned in early times by men of the firſt erudition, and in our own days by the dignified names, amongſt numberleſs others, of Bacon, Boyle, Milton, Locke, and Newton. Dr. Samuel Clarke has collected ſeveral quotations

tations which ſhew that ſome of the wiſer heathens themſelves, before the coming of Chriſt, acknowledged their doubts; complained of perplexity and uncertainty reſpecting the moſt important truths; and teſtified their wiſhes for a divine diſcovery. Ariſtotle expreſsly ſays, "Know, that whatever is ſet "right, and as it ſhould be, in the preſent evil "ſtate of the world, can be done ſo only by "the interpoſition of Providence*."

* Dr. Blackwell has, alſo, given us, in his Sacred Claſſics, vol. II. p. 88. many intereſting paſſages, which clearly mark the general expectation of a Meſſiah, in the heathen world, about the period of our Saviour's appearance. Suetonius and Tacitus both refer to a king, who was to ariſe out of Judea. The Pollio of Virgil almoſt aſſumes the character of a prophecy: And Plato preſents to our notice, amongſt others, the following extraordinary paſſages. He ſays, *A Divine Revelation is neceſſary to explain the true worſhip of God — to add authority to moral precepts — to aſſiſt our beſt endeavours in a virtuous courſe — to fix the future rewards and puniſhments of virtuous, and vicious conduct — and to point out ſome acceptable expiation for ſin.* He introduces Socrates as ſtating to Alcibiades, that *in a future time a divine perſon ſhould appear, who in pure love to man ſhould remove all darkneſs from his mind; and inſtruct him how to offer his prayers, and praiſes in the moſt acceptable way to the Divine Being.* The ſame philoſopher afterwards gives the following account of this Divine Teacher. *With all his illuſtrious qualities mankind will not ſubmit to him. Nay they will uſe him with every indignity. He ſhall be ſcourged; tormented; his eyes burnt; and at length, after every inſtance of contumely, he ſhall be put to death.* See alſo Gilpin's Preface to an Expoſition of the New Teſtament.

XI. The

XI. The ſucceſſive diſcoveries which have been made in the arts and ſciences, and which we who are born in a later period ſee in their full extent, ſhew that it is agreeable to the analogy of the divine government, that the improvement of mankind ſhould be progreſſive. The uſe of hieroglyphics, the art of alphabetic writing, the mariner's compaſs, printing, the extenſion of navigation, the connection of the new world with the old, and many other inſtances which might be adduced, are now ſufficient to ſilence the cavils, founded on the procraſtination of the miſſion of Jeſus Chriſt. And a modern inquirer into the truth and expediency of it may ſatisfy himſelf more completely, than any one could have done eighteen hundred years ago, that it was accompliſhed in the *fulneſs of time*.

XII. But the goſpel diſpenſation itſelf conſtitutes the higheſt vantage ground of the moderns with reſpect to the evidences of chriſtianity. For by diffuſing juſt ſentiments concerning the being, attributes, and moral government of God, and the future expectations of mankind, it has gradually, and almoſt imperceptibly given riſe to a ſyſtem of natural religion, perfectly conſonant to reaſon, yet ſuch as unenlightened reaſon could not have diſcovered; and which being in uniſon with revelation affords the ſtrongeſt confirmation of

of its verity. For Mr. Locke has well remarked, "that every one may obſerve a great "many truths, which he receives at firſt from "others, and readily aſſents to as conſonant "to reaſon, which he would have found it hard, "and perhaps beyond his ſtrength, to have diſ-"covered himſelf. Native and original truth "is not ſo eaſily wrought out of the mine, "as we, who have it already dug and faſhi-"oned unto our hands, are apt to imagine*."

I recommend to your attentive peruſal the diſcourſes of Dr. Elrington, to which I have referred. You will find them perſpicuous, elegant, intereſting, and forcibly argumentative. The author's animadverſions on Mr. Hume at firſt ſhocked my feelings: But though I ſtill regret their ſeverity, I am compelled to acquieſce in their truth and juſtice. *Amicus Socrates, Amicus Plato; ſed magis amica veritas.* With Mr. Hume I was perſonally acquainted at Edinburgh; and was afterwards introduced to his particular notice, by a letter from Dr. Robertſon, the hiſtorian, addreſſed to him during his reſidence at Paris in 1765, when ſecretary to the Britiſh embaſſy. It was

* Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity.

Primo incredibile videtur aliquid tale inveniri poſſe; poſtquam autem inventum ſit, incredibile rurſus videtur, id homines tam diu fugere potuiſſe. Bacon Nov. Organ. Lib. I. Aphor. 110.

impoſſible

impoſſible to know him, without admiring his talents, and various learning, and loving him for the ſuavity of his manners. As a Polemic, however, I was then fully ſenſible that he was always ſubtle, and ſometimes unfair. But alas! the ſame charge attaches, too frequently, to controverſialiſts of every claſs; and perhaps this celebrated genius was led to incur it by degrees almoſt imperceptible to himſelf, The judicious maxim, *nullius jurare in verba magiſtri* is conſtrued to imply a bold oppoſition to every eſtabliſhed opinion: And as there may be, what Lord Bacon happily terms, "a ſuperſtitious fear of ſuperſtition," there may alſo ſubſiſt a prejudice ſo ſtrong againſt ſuppoſed prejudice as to become, with literary men, eſpecially of a metaphyſical turn, one great ſource of ſcepticiſm and infidelity. The imagination is ſtruck with novelty; it appears honourable to ſhake off vulgar trammels; and pride is gratified by the triumph over authority. The paſſions are thus engaged in the cauſe that is eſpouſed, whether it be of truth or of error; and even the ſingularity of any notion or principle, a circumſtance which ought to create doubt and heſitation, tends rather to ſtrengthen the conviction of its certainty. You will recollect the celebrated theorem of Mr. Hume, "that no teſtimony is ſufficient to eſtabliſh a miracle, unleſs the teſtimony

teſtimony be of ſuch a kind, that its falſehood would be more miraculous than the fact it endeavours to eſtabliſh: And even in that caſe there is a mutual deſtruction of arguments, and the ſuperior only gives us an aſſurance, ſuitable to that degree of force which remains after deducting the inferior." It appears by the correſpondence, lately publiſhed, between Mr. Hume and Dr. Campbell, that this theorem was ſuggeſted by the following incident. "I was walking," ſays Mr. Hume, "in the cloiſters of the jeſuits' college of La Fleche, (a town in which I paſſed two years of my youth) and was engaged in converſation with a jeſuit of ſome parts and learning, who was relating to me, and urging ſome nonſenſical miracle lately performed in their convent; which I was tempted to diſpute with him; and as my head was full of the topics of my Treatiſe upon Human Nature, which I was at that time compoſing, this argument immediately occurred to me, and I thought it very much gravelled my companion. But at laſt he obſerved to me, that it was impoſſible for that argument to have any ſolidity; becauſe it operated equally againſt the goſpel as the catholic miracles; which obſervation I thought proper to admit as a ſufficient anſwer*." It

* See preface to Dr. Campbell's Diſſertation on Miracles, p. 22, third edit.

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is probable that Mr. Hume had never, previouſly to this period, directed the attention of his mind to the evidences of chriſtianity, or he muſt have ſeen the fallacy of an argument, that admits of ſuch eaſy confutation. But yielding to a ſudden and lively impreſſion, his imagination became faſcinated with it; and he conceived, according to his own declaration, "that he had made a diſcovery which, with the wiſe and learned, would be an everlaſting check to all kinds of ſuperſtitious deluſion, and conſequently would be uſeful as long as the world endures: For ſo long, he preſumes, will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all hiſtory ſacred and profane*." He would not, therefore, ſuffer himſelf afterwards to give admiſſion to any reaſoning in oppoſition to it. Thus, in a letter to Dr. Blair, he ſtates, "I wiſh for the future, whenever my good fortune throws me in your way, that theſe topics ſhould be forborne between us. I have long ſince done with all inquiries upon ſuch ſubjects; and am become *incapable of inſtruction*; though I know no one who is more capable of conveying it than yourſelf†."

Yet

* See Hume's Eſſay on Miracles, ſect. X.

† See preface to Dr. Campbell's Diſſertation on Miracles, p. 22, third edit.

It is recorded in Boſwell's Life of Dr. Johnſon, vol. I. p. 470, that "Mr. Hume owned to a clergyman, in the "biſhoprick

Yet Mr. Hume has acknowledged "that "there may poſſibly be miracles, or violations "of the uſual courſe of nature, of ſuch a kind "as to admit of proof from human teſti-"mony;" though he denies at the ſame time, with ſome inconſiſtency, "that a mi-"racle can ever be proved ſo as to be the "foundation of a ſyſtem of religion." "Thus, ſays he, "ſuppoſe all authors in all languages "agree, that from the firſt of January 1600, "there was a total darkneſs over the earth for "eight days: Suppoſe that the tradition of

"biſhoprick of Durham, he had never read the New Teſta-"ment with attention." In the ſame work, vol. II. p. 536, the aſſertion is repeated; and Dr. Johnſon ſubjoins, "here then was a man who had been at no pains to inquire into the truth of religion; and who had continually turned his mind the other way."

Mr. Hume's fondneſs for his favourite argument appears in his application of it to the Poems of Oſſian.. "It is indeed ſtrange," ſays he, "that any man of ſenſe ſhould have imagined it poſſible that above twenty thouſand verſes, along with numberleſs hiſtorical facts, could have been preſerved by oral tradition, during fifty generations, by the rudeſt perhaps of all the European nations, the moſt neceſſitous, the moſt turbulent, the moſt unſettled. Where a ſuppoſition is ſo contrary to common ſenſe, any poſitive evidence of it ought not to be regarded. Men run with great avidity to give their evidence in favour of what flatters their paſſions, and their natural prejudices. You are, therefore, over and above indulgent to us in ſpeaking of the matter with heſitation." See Gibbon's Memoirs by Lord Sheffield.

" this extraordinary event is ſtill ſtrong and " lively among the people: That all travellers, " who return from foreign countries, bring us " account of the ſame tradition, without the " leaſt variation or contradiction: It is evident " that our preſent philoſophers, inſtead of " doubting the fact, ought to receive it as " certain, and ought to ſearch for the cauſes " whence it might be derived. The decay, " corruption, and diſſolution of nature is an " event rendered probable by ſo many ana- " logies, that any phænomenon, which ſeems " to have a tendency towards that cataſtrophe, " comes within the reach of human teſtimony, " if that teſtimony be very extenſive and uni- " form*." Now the corruption of the moral world, to ſuch a degree as to endanger its total extinction, is an event at leaſt equally probable with the caſe put by Mr. Hume, relative to the material world. And we know, from the moſt authentic records, that it actually took place at the chriſtian æra. The reſtoration of mankind, therefore, might be conſonant to the order of the divine government, furniſhing an occaſion worthy of the interpoſition of Providence: And the ſupernatural powers given to our Lord and his apoſtles, the inſtruments of its accompliſhment, were

* Hume's Eſſay on Miracles.

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ſuch as reaſon fully juſtifies, becauſe neceſſary to excite attention to their miſſion, and to evince that it was from God, by diſplays of more than human agency, accompanied with more than human wiſdom and benevolence. That we have no *direct analogy*, to confirm the teſtimonies adduced of theſe ſupernatural manifeſtations of power, cannot, with propriety, be alleged by Mr. Hume, who admits that an inhabitant of Sumatra may juſtly believe the converſion of fluid water into ſolid ice, on the evidence of eye witneſſes, though contrary to his own invariable experience. For the fact implies that nature is placed in a ſituation quite unknown to him. A new experiment is made, with the reſult of which he is perſonally unacquainted. If he, then, is not to reject from ignorance a well-aſcertained fact, but to inquire into the cauſes of it, the ſame conduct is incumbent upon us, reſpecting the origin of our religion, and the ſigns and wonders which accompanied its promulgation.

Mr. Hume ſeems to aſcribe *belief* entirely to our *experience* of the truth of teſtimony. But belief is a fundamental principle in human nature, of the moſt extenſive importance; and manifeſts itſelf in the earlieſt periods of life, being the neceſſary antecedent to knowledge, which may ſerve either to confirm or to reject it. This principle, however [beneficial as its

operation is] often degenerates into credulity: And our author well obſerves that "the wiſe lend an academic faith to every report, which favours the paſſions of the reporter, or in any way ſtrikes in with his inclinations and propenſities. For ſuch a man by the help of vanity and a heated imagination may firſt have made a convert of himſelf; and having entered ſeriouſly into the deluſion, will not ſcruple to employ pious frauds in ſupport of what he deems a holy and meritorious cauſe*." But may not the ſceptic or infidel, on ſimilar grounds, become the dupe of his own erroneous zeal, and conceive it lawful to propagate his doctrines by the arts of impoſition and deluſion? The Eſſay on Miracles certainly affords ſtrong reaſons for this ſuppoſition. Some of theſe I have already pointed out; and they are ſtill more manifeſt in the hiſtorical ſtatements, by which the author has ſupported his favourite opinions. I ſhall content myſelf with briefly ſhewing the fallacies of the firſt facts he has adduced; becauſe the books, to which he refers, being in every library, the paſſages in queſtion may be conſulted without difficulty.

To ſubvert the credit of the teſtimonies, brought in ſupport of the miracles of Chriſt and his apoſtles, Mr. Hume relates, from

* See Hume's Eſſay, vol. II. p. 134.

Tacitus,

Tacitus, that Veſpaſian cured a blind man in Alexandria by means of his ſpittle; and one lame in the hand by the touch of his foot, in obedience to a viſion of the god Serapis, who had commanded thoſe perſons to have recourſe to him for their cure. In this ſtory, he ſays, "Every circumſtance ſeems to add weight to the evidence; and might be diſplayed at large with all the force of argument and eloquence. The gravity, ſolidity, age, and probity of Veſpaſian: The hiſtorian a contemporary writer, noted for candour and veracity, the greateſt and moſt penetrating genius, perhaps of all antiquity, and ſo free from every tendency to credulity, that he even lies under the contrary imputation of atheiſm and profaneneſs: The perſons, from whoſe authority he related the miracle, of eſtabliſhed character for judgment and veracity, as we may well preſume, eye witneſſes of the fact, and confirming this teſtimony after the *Flavian family* was deſpoiled of the empire, and could no longer give any reward as the price of a lie: To which if we add the public nature of the facts, it will appear that no evidence can well be ſuppoſed ſtronger for ſo groſs and ſo palpable a falſhood." Suetonius, Mr. Hume ſubjoins in a note, gives nearly the ſame account with Tacitus, in his Life of Veſpaſian*. But ac-

* Ibid, p. 130.

cording to this hiſtorian, *Auctoritas et quaſi majeſtas quædam, ut ſcilicet inopinato et adhuc novo principi deerat: Hæc quoque acceſſit.* The partiſans, therefore, who ſupported his pretenſions, availed themſelves of ſuch artifices as were ſuited to the ſuperſtition of the age: And it is evident that Veſpaſian himſelf was engaged in the plot of impoſition: For when he viſited the temple of Serapis, to conſult that God concerning the fate of the empire, he commanded all men to retire, that he might, without fear of contradiction, pretend to have ſeen the apparition of Baſilides, then confined by ſickneſs at a conſiderable diſtance from Alexandria, whoſe name and preſence were to be alleged as the aſſurance of Divine favour. The narrative of Tacitus affords no reaſon even to conjecture that he gave credit to theſe miracles. They are recorded by him as political occurrences of the time, without quoting, as Mr. Hume aſſerts, *the authority of men of eſtabliſhed character for judgment and veracity, eye-witneſſes, it may be preſumed, of the fact.* And the two contemporary hiſtorians, who have delivered theſe accounts, vary eſſentially from each other.. For Suetonius repreſents that the limb reſtored was the leg, and Tacitus the arm; a diſcrepancy which clearly ſhews that the teſtimony could not have been communicated by eye-witneſſes. The former, alſo,

alſo, ſpeaks of the perſon, who was ſeen by Veſpaſian in the temple, as a freedman; the latter as a grandee of Egypt.

Thus fallacious is Mr. Hume's attempt to give dignity, ſolemnity, and ſtrength of atteſtation to the alleged miracles of Veſpaſian; which being ſelected by him as the moſt ſtriking and authentic in profane hiſtory, we may regard as reflecting, by their futility, additional credit and luſtre on thoſe archetypes, of which they were evidently the counterfeits.

The miraculous ſtory, quoted by Mr. Hume from the Memoirs of Cardinal De Retz; and the accounts which he has given of the cures wrought at the tomb of Abbé Paris have been very ably commented on, and confuted by ſeveral diſtinguiſhed authors*. But Dr. Elrington, I think, has moſt fully ſhewn the author's ſpecious colourings and miſtatements: And I ſhall here tranſcribe the general concluſions which he draws from his intereſting inveſtigation of this ſubject. "In the ſmall col-
"lection of only nine cures, (performed at the
"tomb of Abbé Paris) there is not one that
"poſſeſſes the characteriſtics which prove the
"interference of divine power; not one in
"which a diſorder clearly beyond the influ-
"ence of the imagination was inſtantaneouſly

* Dr. Adams; Dr. Douglas, Biſhop of Sarum; Dr. Campbell; Dr. Paley; Dr. Elrington, &c. &c.

" and perfectly removed: Nay more, not one
" of any kind in which health and ſtrength
" were completely and at once reſtored;—and
" are not theſe facts which I have now ſtated
" deciſive of the diſtinction between the goſ-
" pel miracles, and thoſe boaſted wonders
" which have been compared with them? Do
" they not prove plainly how infinitely difficult
" it is to carry on a pretence to miracles, in
" ſuch a manner as to avoid detection?

" But do they not, it may be objected,
" prove alſo, how eaſily mankind may be im-
" poſed upon, how little human teſtimony
" deſerves to be relied upon, when ſuch mul-
" titudes have ſolemnly given evidence to falſ-
" hoods? And is not this the only point our
" adverſary undertook to prove? Yes, cer-
" tainly, but he has proved it in caſes in which
" no one entertained a doubt about it. That
" where ignorance and ſuperſtition have pre-
" vailed, where intereſt excites to deceit, and
" power protects it from detection, where few
" are willing to doubt, and where none can
" with ſafety inquire, inſtances may occur in
" which the artifices of men, who took advan-
" tage of theſe circumſtances, have ſucceſs-
" fully impoſed upon the multitude, needs not
" any laboured argument to prove. But how
" is chriſtianity affected by this?—If an in-
" ſtance were produced in which miracles were

" ſucceſsfully

" ſucceſsfully pretended to among ſuch a peo-
" ple as I have deſcribed, by perſons adverſe
" to their ſuperſtitions, we then might admit
" the objection to have weight.

" Inſtead, therefore, of the evidences of
" chriſtianity being weakened by the numer-
" ous hiſtories of miracles which are boaſted
" by the votaries of every religion, they are in
" fact confirmed by them. For, amongſt all
" thoſe hiſtories, not one can be produced
" which does not differ from the narrative of
" the goſpels, in circumſtances of the moſt
" deciſive importance, in the nature of the
" evidence by which it is ſupported, or of the
" facts it relates. If, therefore, we make ex-
" perience the rule by which we judge, we
" ſhall pronounce, without heſitation, that
" ſome cauſe more than human operated at the
" promulgation of our religion; for what art
" is capable of effecting has been in innumer-
" able inſtances tried, and yet never have the
" events which accompanied that promulga-
" tion been imitated with ſucceſs. Detected
" in their infancy, or gradually ſinking into
" oblivion, the counſels and the works of men
" have been brought to nought; whilſt the
" failure of every attempt which has been
" made againſt chriſtianity proves that they
" who oppoſe it contend againſt God*."

* See Elrington's Sermons, p. 241.

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I have dwelt long on Mr. Hume's Eſſay concerning miracles, becauſe I well know the impreſſion which it makes on the minds of young perſons; and recollect that, at an early period of my own life, it ſtaggered, for a while, my faith in chriſtianity. Indeed the influence which this pleaſing and ingenious writer has had over the opinions of mankind, not only on ſubjects of religion, but of ethics and politics, has been extenſive in a very remarkable degree. His principle of *utility*, which he makes the rule of moral duty, has obtained almoſt univerſal currency; firſt as enforced by himſelf; then as ſanctioned, though on different grounds, by Dr. Paley, under the denomination of *expediency*; and afterwards as enlarged, and carried to all its extravagant and injurious conſequences by Mr. Godwin, in his Inquiry into *Juſtice**. The Hiſtory of England by Mr. Hume is ſo intereſting, philoſophical, and inſtructive, that it has nearly ſuperſeded every other; and has effected a conſiderable change in the public mind, with reſpect

* The principle of *general expediency*, as the ſtandard of morality, has been admirably inveſtigated by the Rev. Thomas Giſborne, M. A. whom I cannot mention but in terms of the moſt cordial eſteem, reſpect, and friendſhip. His work is a model of controverſy; being at once diſtinguiſhed for candour, liberality, and force of argument. See Principles of Moral Philoſophy, fourth edit. 1798.

to

to various conſtitutional points of great importance. Yet this work has been ſhewn to abound in prejudiced and partial repreſentations *. It ſyſtematically exaggerates the oppreſſive government of the Tudors, to extenuate the arbitrary conduct of the Stuarts. And ſuch is the attachment of the author to his political hypotheſis, that in the Memoirs of his own Life, he thus expreſſes himſelf, "I was ſo little inclined to yield to the ſenſeleſs clamour of the Whigs, that in above a hundred alterations, which farther ſtudy, reading, or reflection engaged me to make in the reigns of the two firſt Stuarts, I have made *all of them invariably to the Tory ſide.*" This fact marks a pertinacious adherence to his prepoſſeſſions. For it is almoſt morally impoſſible, actuated as he was by the ſpirit of party, that all his miſtakes ſhould have been confined to one ſide of a diſputed queſtion; or have proved uniformly unjuſt to the cauſe he ſo warmly eſpouſed.

The maxim of Cicero, *quis neſcit primam eſſe hiſtoriæ legem, ne quid falſi dicere audeat; deinde, ne quid veri, non audeat* †; is applicable to the polemic no leſs than to the hiſtorian. But in the inveſtigation or delivery of religious

* See Towers's Remarks on Hume's Hiſtory.

† Cicero de Oratore, lib. II.

truth

truth, though we ought to diveſt ourſelves, as much as poſſible, of every prepoſſeſſion, it is ſurely a reaſonable deference to the judgment of the public, concerning any opinion or doctrine, that we ſhould firſt examine, with fairneſs and attention, the arguments in its defence, before we ſet ourſelves in hoſtile oppoſition to it, or openly and boldly declare our full conviction of its falſhood*. The ſincere lover of truth will purſue it with diligence, ſteadineſs, impartiality, and zeal tempered with moderation. He will adopt it with modeſty, with a due ſenſe of the imperfection of his own judgment, and with unfeigned candour towards thoſe who differ from him. He will communicate it without arrogance, and with that ſuavity which an earneſt deſire to inſure its favourable reception ought to dictate; whilſt, at the ſame time, he will maintain it with all the firmneſs which ſincere belief inſpires and juſtifies. Biſhop Hoadley, in his Life of Dr. Clarke, when he recites the diſpute which ſubſiſted between that excellent divine and Dr. Waterland, on the ſubject of the Trinity, juſtly obſerves, "that ſince men "of ſuch thought and ſuch learning have "ſhewn the world, in their example, how "widely the moſt honeſt inquirers after truth

* See the Author's Moral and Literary Diſſertations.

"may

" may differ upon ſuch ſubjects, it ſhould, " methinks, abate our mutual cenſures, and a " little take off from our poſitiveneſs about " the neceſſity of explaining in *this* or *that* one " determinate ſenſe, the ancient paſſages re- " lating to points of ſo ſublime a nature*." The acrimony, manifeſted concerning ſubjects of more direct importance to the virtue and happineſs of mankind, would be greatly mollified were we to conſider, that the Deity equally ſuperintends the moral, intellectual, and phyſical world; and that he uniformly educes good from evil through the whole extent of his wiſe and benevolent adminiſtration. We ſhould thus learn to view error, not indeed with indifference, but without malignity, as being the neceſſary præcurſor of truth. Lord Verulam has obſerved, " that " even the ſchool which is moſt accuſed of " atheiſm, doth moſt demonſtrate religion: " That is the ſchool of Leucippus, and De- " mocritus, and Epicurus." Infidelity itſelf we might thus regard as capable of becoming ultimately the hand-maid to chriſtianity, according to the opinion of Sir Iſaac Newton, by extinguiſhing the ſpirit of ſuperſtition and perſecution, and furniſhing the means of re-

* See Biſhop Hoadley's Account of the Life of Dr. Clarke, p. 26.

eſtabliſhing

eſtabliſhing the goſpel inſtitution, in its original beauty, ſimplicity, and purity*.

If you engage in theological controverſy, I truſt you will never arrogate even the appearance of a claim to preſide over conſcience, however erroneous it may be; or aſſume any authority, in ſpiritual matters, but what ariſes from the perſuaſive influence of ſuperior reaſon. A clergyman has peculiar motives to ſet a guard upon his prejudices and his paſſions: For having ſtrong profeſſional intereſts and obligations, he is not only liable to be biaſſed, but unavoidably ſubjected to the ſuſpicion of being *governed* by them. It behoves him, therefore, to provoke no man to wrath by his mode of diſputation; but to conciliate goodwill, by diſplaying the benignity and gentleneſs of chriſtian toleration. I ſhall conclude with the ſage remarks of Lord Verulam. "Men "ought to take heed of rending God's church "by two kinds of controverſies: The one is "when the matter of the point controverted is "too ſmall and light, not worth the heat and "ſtrife about it, kindled only by contradic-"tion; the other is, when the matter of the "point controverted is great, but is driven to

* This obſervation of Sir I. Newton was made to Dr. Samuel Clarke, and communicated by him to Mr. Whiſton, who has related it in his Eſſay on the Revelations, p. 321, ſecond edit.

"an

" an over great ſubtilty and obſcurity, ſo that " it becometh a thing rather ingenious than " ſubſtantial. A man that is of judgment " and underſtanding, ſhall ſometimes hear ig- " norant men differ, and know well within " himſelf that thoſe which ſo differ mean one " thing, and yet they themſelves would never " agree. And if it come ſo to paſs, in that " diſtance of judgment which is between man " and man, ſhall we not think that God above, " that knows the heart, doth not diſcern that " frail men in ſome of their contradictions " intend the ſame thing, and accepteth of " both*?

COMMUNICATION TO THE SAME.

Particular Providence.—Prayer.

THAT your late illneſs has increaſed your conviction of a governing Providence, is the ſalutary and natural influence of ſuch diſpenſations. They excite our ſerious attention; they evince our entire dependance upon God; they call forth latent principles of duty and reſignation; and they inſpire us with cordial gratitude for bleſſings we formerly overlooked, and for the removal of evils, the preſſure of which we have been taught to feel, from painful experience. In ſuch operations, however,

* See Bacon's Eſſay of Unity in Religion.

we

we ought not to preſume that there is any partial interpoſition of the Deity in our favour. It is a ſufficient privilege and comfort, that we are each of us the objects of his guardian care and unceaſing protection; that he loves and pities us, as a father loves and pities his children; and that it accords perfectly with the general conſtitution of things to educe health from ſickneſs, and moral benefit from corporeal ſufferings.

I am doubtful, but would expreſs my doubts with reverence and humility, whether on any occaſion it can be ſuppoſed, that God ſuſpends or changes that order, which his ſovereign power and unerring wiſdom have eſtabliſhed in his creation. Yet as moral and natural cauſes reciprocally influence each other, it may be conformable to this order that the former ſhould be adapted to the latter, ſo as to produce, by their combination, thoſe great and important events, which many writers have denominated particular providences. Thus, when the prince of Orange eſcaped king James's fleet, and landed his troops in England, by a ſudden and favourable change of the wind, the change, I conceive, took place according to the uſual courſe of nature; but that the revolution to be accompliſhed was included in the ſcheme of divine adminiſtration, and every agent employed in it executed

cuted his province in the mode, and preciſely in the time known to the Deity to coincide with the variations produced by the ordinary operations of nature, in the motions of the atmoſphere. Nor does this explanation involve in it the doctrine of fataliſm. For the preſcience of the Deity has no more influence over the operations of the human mind, than our knowledge of the uniform laws of nature affects the divine direction of the motions of the heavenly bodies, or the flux and reflux of the tides. The knowledge of what is to come, abſtractedly conſidered, is as devoid of energy as that of the events that are paſt*.

But particular changes in the ſtate of things may, according to the immutable laws of God, be the reſult of concomitant changes. A ſick man labouring under pain of the head, oppreſſion of the *præcordia*, and all the anxieties of hypochondriaciſm, may by a vigorous and virtuous effect of his mind, evinced perhaps by ſome pious expreſſion or ejaculation,

* "The knowledge of God," ſays Archbiſhop King, "is very different from the knowledge of man, which implies *ſucceſſion*, and ſeeing objects one after another; but the exiſtence of the attributes of the Deity can have no relation to time; for all things, paſt, preſent, and to come; are all at once preſent to the Divine Mind."

He fills his own eternal NOW;
And ſees our ages waſte. WATTS.

derive almoſt inſtantaneous alleviation of his ſufferings. For the ſtate of the nervous ſyſtem often undergoes ſudden changes from mental impreſſions. Under ſuch circumſtances, the happy patient will exult in the goodneſs of his God, who has thus kindly liſtened to the fervour of his prayers. And he may juſtly indulge his gratitude: For it is to the goodneſs of God that we are indebted for a conſtitution ſo favourable to our improvement in that virtue, which is eſſential to true felicity. In this ſenſe we may properly explain thoſe aſſurances in ſcripture, "*Aſk and it ſhall be given: Seek and you ſhall find: Knock and it ſhall be opened unto you.*"

There are few perſons, ſufficiently advanced in years, who have not experienced eſcapes from imminent danger, and converſions of great apparent evils into unexpected good. I ſhall briefly mention two occurrences of this nature in my own life, which now preſent themſelves to my recollection. Some time ago I had a profeſſional viſit to make to a lady, who reſided a few miles from Mancheſter. I called upon a medical friend, who was to accompany me. Juſt as he was ſtepping into my carriage, a gentleman accoſted him, and detained him in converſation about two minutes. We then proceeded; and on approaching the bridge, which had been recently erected over the river Irwell,

Irwell, we heard a dreadful craſh, proceeding from the fall of the central arch. Had we not been interrupted in our courſe, by the ſeemingly caſual circumſtance of my companion's converſation with the gentleman who accoſted him, we ſhould probably have reached the bridge, and been buried in its ruins. This was, doubtleſs, an occaſion for warm emotions of gratitude to heaven. But it would be preſumption to aſcribe the event to a particular providence, or divine interpoſition. I was ſitting, when a boy, on the margin of a very deep pond, engaged in fiſhing. By the act of pulling out my watch I loſt my balance; and the ſtool on which I was placed, having only three legs, I was precipitated head-long into the pond. How I eſcaped from drowning is inexplicable; for I could not then ſwim, and had no aſſiſtance. But the effect of the accident was highly ſalutary; for it was ſucceeded by a ſevere bilious vomiting, which cured me of a hectic fever and *maraſmus*, likely to prove fatal to me. In both theſe caſes the order of nature remained unchanged, and effects followed invariably their preciſe cauſes. Yet the order itſelf was to me benign and merciful; and the proper ground of thankfulneſs and praiſe. In the concluſion, which my much reſpected friend Dr. Beattie draws from the following extraordinary fact, I cannot acquieſce.

" As a gentleman was walking acroſs the Dee,
" a few miles from Aberdeen, when it was
" frozen, the ice gave way in the middle of
" the river, and down he ſunk; but kept him-
" ſelf from being carried away in the current,
" by graſping his gun which had fallen
" athwart the opening. A dog, who at-
" tended him, after many fruitleſs attempts
" to reſcue his maſter, ran to a neighbouring
" village, and took hold of the coat of the
" firſt perſon he met. The man was alarmed,
" and would have diſengaged himſelf: But
" the dog regarded him with a look ſo kind
" and ſo ſignificant, and endeavoured to pull
" him along with ſo gentle a violence, that
" he began to think there might be ſome-
" thing extraordinary in the caſe, and ſuffered
" himſelf to be conducted by the animal;
" who brought him to his maſter, in time to
" ſave his life. Was there not here, both
" memory and recollection, guided by expe-
" rience, and by what in a human creature
" we ſhould not ſcruple to call good ſenſe?
" No: Rather let us ſay that here was an in-
" terpoſition of heaven; who, having thought
" fit to employ the animal as an inſtrument
" of this deliverance, was pleaſed to qualify
" him for it by a ſupernatural impulſe. Here,
" certainly was an event ſo uncommon, that
" from the known qualities of a dog no perſon

" would

" would have expected it: And I know not " whether this animal ever gave proof of ex- " traordinary ſagacity in any other inſtance. " N. B. The perſon thus preſerved, whoſe " name was Irvine, died about the year 1778. " His ſtory has been much talked of in the " neighbourhood. I give it, as it was told " by himſelf to a relation of his, a gentleman " of honour and learning, and my particular " friend; from whom I had it, and who read " and approved of this account, before it " went to preſs*."

That in this narrative there may ſubſiſt ſome fallacy, notwithſtanding the care taken to ſubſtantiate all the circumſtances of it, many will ſuppoſe, who know how ſtrongly the love of the marvellous is impreſſed on the human mind. But allowing the whole relation to be true, I ſhould ſay with the poet; ſhall we

> ..... Of God, as of each other deem,
> Or his invariable acts deduce
> From ſudden counſels tranſient as our own:
> Nor farther of his bounty, than the event
> Which haply meets our loud and eager prayer,
> Acknowledge; nor, beyond the drop minute

* See Beattie's Diſſertations Moral and Critical, p. 63, 4to.

Which haply we have taſted, heed the ſource
That flows for all; the fountain of his love*.

Such were the ſentiments which I entertained concerning a *particular providence*, when the foregoing communication was tranſmitted (in 1793) to my ſon at St. Peterſburgh. But on a careful reviſion of what was then advanced, I am inclined to think that my views of this important doctrine were too limited, to be ſtrictly conſonant either to the hiſtorical facts, or the repreſentations and injunctions relative to prayer, contained in the ſacred ſcriptures. And if we admit the truth of revelation, the evidence which it delivers of the *ſpecial interpoſition of God*, in the phyſical and moral government of the world, muſt be deemed deciſive. Inſtead, therefore, of involving ourſelves in the mazes of metaphyſical ſubtilty, let us direct our attention to the foundation of that intercourſe with the Deity, which is at once the moſt intereſting duty, and the nobleſt privilege of our nature.

We are taught, *that he who cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him: That in him we live, and move, and have our being: That as a father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth*

* Akenſides's Pleaſures of Imagination, Book Second, new part, line 215.

them

them that fear him: That if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more ſhall our father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that aſk him. For this thing, ſays St. Paul, *I beſought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me:* And our Saviour is recorded to have prayed the *third time, ſaying the ſame words, O! my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me: Nevertheleſs not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Indeed the form of devotion, which Chriſt recommended to his diſciples, affords the cleareſt proof that he regarded prayer as an acceptable, and efficacious act. Nor is this ſuppoſition inconſiſtent with that immutability of the divine attributes, which is eſſential to their nature and perfection. The wiſdom, benevolence, and juſtice of the Deity are *the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever.* But this unchangeableneſs implies that, in their exerciſe, they are always accommodated to the pureſt rectitude, and to the greateſt ſum of felicity. And thus a providence is eſtabliſhed, which diſcriminates between the virtuous and the vicious; which adapts the propereſt means to the accompliſhment of the beſt ends; and regulates all things ſo as to work together for the higheſt good. To this ſuperintending direction a pious chriſtian will look up, with humble confidence, for eaſe under ſuffering, for protection

in danger, and conſolation in ſorrow. If prayer were not enjoined, as a duty, he would inſtinctively perform it as a refuge for human infirmity. And he may reaſonably preſume that ſuch filial dependence will be indulgently accepted by his heavenly Father, who in his divine adminiſtration is characterized as being ever ready *to bind up the broken in heart*; *to heal the wounded ſpirit*; *and to give good gifts to them that* worthily *aſk him.*

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE SAME.

Education, Public and Private.

I REGRET our difference of opinion on the ſubject of education; but am happy to find you ſo ſteadily and affectionately intereſted in the tuition of your two younger brothers. In your caſe formerly, (and theirs is now nearly the ſame) I am perſuaded that a large public ſchool would have proved injurious to your health, happineſs, and improvement. It becomes you, therefore, to appreciate duly the benefits you enjoyed, in thoſe ſeveral points, from the inſtructions of a maſter, peculiarly gifted with a knowledge of the juvenile character; mild and affectionate in his manners; yet firm and ſteady in his conduct; and more than ordinarily ſkilful in exerciſing and varying the direction of the mental powers.

Your

Your companions, alſo, were thoſe who were likely, in future, to enter with you into the active ſcenes of life; whoſe intereſts and purſuits were to be connected with your own; and with whom it was, conſequently, of the moſt importance to form early habitudes of familiarity and friendſhip. They were in number ſufficient for all the purpoſes of emulation and competition, of paſtime and agility: And it fortunately happened that they were, in general, boys of vivacity, genius, and good diſpoſitions—You will permit me, I truſt, to add what in the retroſpect will ever afford me conſcious ſatisfaction, that with ſcholaſtic tuition, paternal and maternal inſtruction, a watchful guard over all your words and actions, an inſtant correction of every inordinate paſſion, and a ſolicitude for ſimplicity, purity, and rectitude in the inmoſt receſſes of your heart, were aſſiduouſly combined. If you have done juſtice, as I hope and indeed am confident you have, to the culture beſtowed upon you in the ſtage of life to which I refer, I may without preſumption aſſert, that your attainments are far ſuperior to what you would have made, with your conſtitution of mind, either at Eton or Weſtminſter. In thoſe ſeminaries you might have acquired certain exterior accompliſhments, of which you now perhaps feel the want: But human worth

is

is to be eſtimated by moral and intellectual endowments; which may ſubſiſt in a high degree, though concealed by modeſty from the notice of the world—You urge that virtue conſiſts in action; and that whatever incites to action is favourable to it—Virtue conſiſts in rectitude of conduct, flowing from rectitude of principle. It is the habitual exertions of a mind impreſſed with the love of goodneſs, conſcious of the force of moral obligation, and fitted for the paſſive no leſs than the active duties of life. We muſt look for it not merely in external conduct, but in the motives which govern it; and eſpecially in that diſcipline of the heart, which operates in ſecret, as well as in public, and forms the true conſtituent of all that is amiable, as well as dignified in the human character. Actions may be uſeful or ſplendid, yet devoid of moral worth, becauſe proceeding from ſelfiſhneſs, pride, inordinate ambition, or vain glory. In early education, the ſtricteſt attention is required to the eſtabliſhment of right principles, which may be conſidered, at that period, as the elements of virtue. But in a public ſeminary, this can form no part of the ſyſtem which is regularly purſued. And the juvenile mind muſt be left, in a great meaſure, to its antecedent propenſities and habits; or committed to the caſual operation of ſchool

ſociety,

ſociety, in which the forward and corrupt poſſeſs more influence than the modeſt and the good.

" Now look on him whoſe very voice in tone
" Juſt echoes thine, whoſe features are thine own,
" And ſtroke his poliſhed cheek, of pureſt red,
" And lay thine hand upon his flaxen head,
" And ſay, my boy, th' unwelcome hour is come,
" When thou, tranſplanted from thy genial home,
" Muſt find a colder ſoil, and bleaker air,
" And truſt for ſafety to a ſtranger's care;
" What character, what turn thou wilt aſſume
" From conſtant converſe with I know not whom;
" Who there will court thy friendſhip, with what views,
" And, artleſs as thou art, whom thou wilt chuſe;
" Though much depends on what thy choice ſhall be,
" Is all chance medley, and unknown to me.
" Can'ſt thou, the tear juſt trembling on thy lids,
" And while the dreadful riſque foreſeen forbids,
" Free too, and under no conſtraining force,
" Unleſs the ſway of cuſtom warp thy courſe,
" Lay ſuch a ſtake upon the loſing ſide,
" Merely to gratify ſo blind a guide?

" 'Tis not enough that Greek or Roman page,
" At ſtated hours, his freakiſh thoughts engage;
" Ev'n in his paſtimes he requires a friend
" To warn, and teach him ſafely to unbend;
" O'er all his pleaſures gently to preſide,
" Watch his emotions, and controul their tide;
" And, levying thus, and with an eaſy ſway,
" A tax of profit from his very play,
" T' impreſs a value, not to be eraſed,
" On moments ſquander'd elſe, and running all to waſte.

" And

" And ſeems it nothing in a father's eye,
" That unimproved thoſe many moments fly?
" And is he well content his ſon ſhould find
" No nouriſhment to feed his growing mind,
" But conjugated verbs, and nouns declin'd*?

In Cowper's Tirocinium, from which theſe lines are extracted, you will find many excellent obſervations, worthy of your ſerious attention. I would recommend, alſo, to your re-peruſal the admirable view which our friend Dr. Barnes has given, in the Mancheſter Society's Memoirs, of the comparative arguments in favour of public and private education†. The ſubject, indeed, is deeply intereſting, as it involves not only practical truth, but moral feelings, which have a direct reference to you as a ſon, and to me as a father. In your preſent ſituation, it muſt occaſionally fall to your lot, to be conſulted on the deſignation of young men; and it behoves you to be qualified to offer advice, with a well-grounded confidence in the rectitude of your judgment. The acquiſition of health, ſtrength, knowledge, virtue, and happineſs conſtitutes the primary end of all ſcholaſtic inſtitutions; and that ſyſtem of diſcipline and inſtruction may be regarded as the beſt, which

* Cowper's Poems, vol. II. p. 325 and 337.

† See Memoirs of the Literary and Philoſophical Society of Mancheſter, vol. II. p. 1.

moſt

moſt completely inſures theſe attainments, with the feweſt exceptions, and in the greateſt variety of caſes. I have long conſidered large public ſchools as lotteries, furniſhing ſome dazzling prizes, but attended with general loſs. The reaſon of this ſeems to be, that youths who poſſeſs great ambition, united with great talents, experience in ſuch ſchools, very powerful incentives to extraordinary exertions, in the future proſpects, and dignified witneſſes which they afford; circumſtances depreſſing to thoſe of a different turn of mind. Whereas private ſchools cheriſh moderate emulation; encourage mediocrity of talents; and thus are better fitted to exerciſe and improve the general ſcale of human intellect. I conceive it will be found, that of the number of men who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the different walks of ſcience, the largeſt proportion conſiſts of thoſe who have been educated in private, or the leſs public ſeminaries. I could give a long liſt of names in proof of this poſition; but ſhall content myſelf with mentioning Sir Iſaac Newton, Mr. Locke, Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Pope, Dr. Warburton, Dr. Middleton, Mr. James Harris, and the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. Grotius, in a letter to Iſaac Voſſius, ſtates his ſentiments on the education of boys in the following terms; "I know," ſays he, "that

"young

"young perſons learn only when they are to-
"gether; and that their application is lan-
"guid where there is no emulation. I am
"as little a friend to ſchools, where the ma-
"ſter ſcarcely knows the names of his ſcho-
"lars; where the number is ſo great, that he
"cannot diſtribute his attention upon each
"of them, whoſe compoſition requires a par-
"ticular attention." I ſhall conclude with a ſimilar obſervation of Dr. Barnes, in the paper to which I have before referred. "The "MIDDLE PLAN ſeems calculated to blend, "in ſome degree, the advantages, and to "divide the diſadvantages, of both the other. "By enlarging a private ſchool, ſo as more "nearly to approach a public one, you ſecure "every deſirable advantage for emulation. "And, by having no more pupils than can "be under the continual inſpection and ma-
"nagement of the maſter, you provide for "that peculiar and conſtant attention to every "individual, which is abſolutely neceſſary to "his beſt improvement."

MAXIMS, IRONICAL AND LUDICROUS*.

TO be exempt from faults, deprives a man of the merit of overcoming them.

* Continued from page 75, Part I.

Overlook

Overlook your own failings; be rigid towards the failings of others; for it is wiſer to give indulgence to one fool, than to many.

To be wiſer to day than yeſterday, is the confeſſion of paſt ignorance or folly.

A pure ſtream may diſcover mud at the bottom; but a muddy ſtream conceals it from our view. A muddy underſtanding, therefore, is better fitted, than a clear one, for the arts of life.

Acquire the character of a wit, and you may be at liberty to play the fool.

A blockhead may tell the truth; but a man of genius only ſhould preſume to lie: For original invention is required in the firſt falſhood that is uttered; and twenty inventions afterwards to ſupport it.

The boaſter has the merit of being laborious; for he muſt always take great pains to appear what he is not.

By the degree of your vanity your underſtanding will be meaſured; for every man has juſt as much of the one, as he is ſhort of the other.

Retire from the active ſcenes and duties of life; and thus ſecure your innocence, even though it be at the expence of your virtue.

Half the value of a ſecret conſiſts in the honour derived from the confidence repoſed in you: But of what avail is this honour, if it

it be unknown? Divulge a ſecret, therefore, *confidentially*, and you will at once receive, and confer honour.

To do one thing, and think of another; or to do two things at once, may be regarded as marks of a ſuperior compaſs of mind.

If you wiſh to blazon your virtues, ſtate them as infirmities of your nature, and lament the evils which you experience, from your too eaſy diſpoſition, your ſcrupulous honour, and old-faſhioned integrity.

Homo ſum, humani nihil à me alienum puto. This maxim furniſhes an everlaſting apology for meddling in other men's affairs.

Aſſume a virtue if you have it not.

Aſk for every thing, that you may get ſomething.

Learn the art of ſmall talk, that is, to utter words without matter. It ſerves the ignorant as a ſubſtitute for what they cannot ſay, and men of knowledge for what they ſhould not ſay.

He is the moſt agreeable companion who can beſt be talked to; not he who can talk the beſt. To be a whetſtone to the knowledge of others ſhould be the ambition of him, who is ſolicitous to pleaſe. For the art of pleaſing is to make thoſe with whom you converſe pleaſed with themſelves.

If you would raiſe doubts concerning your veracity, confirm what you ſay by aſſeverations. It

It is meritorious to bear the misfortunes of a neighbour with the patience of a chriſtian; and beneficial to ſhew him your fortitude by forwardneſs to give him advice and conſolation.

" To err in ſmall things is alas! my fate.
Note well the anſwer—You're exact in great."

" As proof that you poſſeſs much wit,
Be very ſhy of uſing it."

" On every ſubject ſtill diſpute,
Confute, change ſides, again confute."

" Make true and falſe, unjuſt and juſt
Of no uſe, but to be diſcuſt."

" Oaths are but words, and words but wind;
Too feeble inſtruments to bind."

" Oaths were not purpoſed, more than law,
To keep the good and juſt in awe."

" Truth is all precious and divine,
Too rich a pearl for carnal ſwine."

" Honour is like that glaſſy bubble,
That finds philoſophers ſuch trouble,
Whoſe leaſt part crack'd, the whole does fly,
And wits are crack'd to find out why."

Experience gives wiſdom; and the indiſcreet have the largeſt opportunities of acquiring it.

" Heavy indeed are the taxes of the ſtate: But we are all taxed twice as much by our idleneſs; three times as much by our pride; and four times as much by our folly."

Why ſhould you ſet a value on life, ſince you ſquander time of which it is compoſed?

"A ſleeping fox catches no poultry. There will be ſleeping enough in the grave, as poor Richard ſays."

"Loſt time is never found again; and what we call time enough, always proves little enough."

"Lazineſs travels ſo ſlowly, that poverty ſoon overtakes her."

"He that lives upon hope will die faſting."

"In the affairs of this world, men are ſaved not by faith, but by the want of it."

We love our prejudices, ſays an eloquent political writer, becauſe they are prejudices: We ſhould, therefore, hate what reaſon approves, becauſe it is rational.

The proverb ſays, every thing has two handles. Be ſure always to lay hold of the one which beſt ſuits your preſent purpoſe.

When your advice is aſked on any difficult queſtion, you will acquire the character of a wiſe man, if you avoid a direct anſwer, and ſhelter your ignorance under the ſage obſervation of Sir Roger de Coverly, "that much may be ſaid on both ſides."

If all be well that ends well; the event conſecrates the means.

Think twice before you ſpeak once; that is, make pauſes in your converſation; uſe expletives

pletives to allow time for reflection; knit your brows, and aſſume the air of pondering; then utter your wiſe ſaw, and you will paſs in the world for a Solomon.

Never give the reaſon *why*, when you expreſs your preference or averſion—

I do not like you Doctor Fell,
The reaſon why I cannot tell;
But this I know full well,
I do not like you Doctor Fell.

Major eſt ille qui judicium abſtulit, quam qui meruit—From this maxim of Quintilian, we may infer, that it is the glory of the orator, the advocate, the preacher, and the free-thinker to perplex the truth, and to diſplay his ſkill in making the worſe appear the better reaſon.

Since the union of divinity and humanity is alleged to be the great article of our religion, it is odd, ſays Dean Swift, to ſee ſome clergymen, when they write of divinity, totally devoid of humanity.

" Church yards are dormitories of the dead, and churches are often dormitories of the living."

PIETY THE CONSUMMATION OF MORALITY.

AND when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo be ſubject unto him, that put all things under him, that GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. 1 Corinth. xv. 28. Theſe words afford an awful and ſublime view of the final conſummation of all things: And though no language, however energetic or dignified, can give us adequate conceptions of the counſels of the Almighty, yet the great ſcheme of divine wiſdom and goodneſs, we are aſſured by the inſpired apoſtle, is carrying on with a ſteady and uniform progreſs. *The end cometh when the kingdom ſhall be delivered up to the Father, and all rule, and all authority, and power ſhall be put down; that God may be all in all.* It is the privilege and the glory of our nature, that we are formed with capacities for the knowledge and love of its great and benevolent author. Limited as this knowledge and love may be, in the preſent infancy of our exiſtence, the univerſal and ſpiritual dominion of God, which St. Paul hath announced, implies their future exaltation; and that in the exerciſe and improvement of our intellectual and moral faculties, we ſhall ever be approaching to, though ever infinitely diſtant from, the fountain of all excellence

cellence. To co-operate with divine wiſdom and power, and to accelerate the complete ſubjection of our ſouls to the government of God, conſtitutes our duty and our higheſt intereſt. The duty enters into every relation which we ſuſtain in the preſent life; and will be our ſupreme and everlaſting good in that which is to come. Permit me, therefore, to call your ſerious attention to this momentous ſubject; that we may trace the divinity within us, and diſcover our intimate union with him, in all the moral dependencies and connections of our nature. Morality is the government, culture, and right direction of the faculties, paſſions, and affections of the human mind. That *God may be all in all*, he muſt become their primary object; and I ſhall endeavour to ſhew that piety is the conſummation of morality, by conſidering,

1. Its connection with, and influence on, ſocial; and,

2. On the perſonal virtues of mankind.

When the Phariſee tempted our Saviour, inquiring of him, *which is the great commandment in the law? Jeſus ſaid unto him, thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind. This is the firſt and great commandment. And the ſecond is like unto it. Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf.* We have here the authority of our

divine maſter, for the ſtrict coincidence of the love of man with the love of God. And if we view the Deity, as the parent of ourſelves, and of all the inhabitants of this world; and feel towards him filial veneration and attachment, we are neceſſarily incited to regard the whole human race as brethren; to cheriſh benevolence towards them; and to co-operate with our common Father in the exerciſe of beneficence and good-will. Piety thus forms the conſtituent of all the generous and tender charities of the human heart. It moves us *to mourn with thoſe that mourn, and to rejoice with thoſe that rejoice.* It ſuſpends anger, mollifies reſentment, and diſpoſes to complete forgiveneſs. Awfully ſenſible of the greatneſs, and of the perfection of the Deity, and of our own imbecility and guilt, we look up to him for tenderneſs towards our infirmity, and for the pardon of our ſins. And as our fellow-creatures are in circumſtances preciſely ſimilar, we intuitively deduce, from ſuch reflection, the obligation of indulgence to them, and the duties of forbearance, and long-ſuffering. And thus we ſupplicate the Father of all, *to forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive his children, and our brethren, their treſpaſſes againſt us.*

When we contemplate in the Deity the ſublime attribute of JUSTICE, as diſplayed towards all the ſubjects of his government,

we

we derive, from this conſideration, the cleareſt knowledge of its nature and univerſality, the pureſt regard to it, and the ſtrongeſt conviction of its moral obligation. To render to every one his due, is the law of juſtice, ſimple in its import, equally binding on all, and without limitation, either of time or place. The providence of God is one uniform diſplay of it; and though *his ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts*, ſo that we cannot always trace the abſolute equity of his adminiſtrations, yet we are aſſured, both from reaſon and ſcripture, *that the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Impreſſed with this conviction, and elevated in our views of the divine attribute of juſtice, a ſuperiority is formed to every temptation to fraud, perfidy, extortion, and violence. Magiſtrates will be, without partiality, *a terror to evil doers, and a praiſe and protection to them that do well.* Maſters will impoſe no unneceſſary burthens on their ſervants, and give unto them the retribution which is due: And ſervants will honour and obey their maſters, *not with eye-ſervice, but in ſingleneſs of heart; with good will, doing ſervice as to the Lord, and not to man.* In commerce the evangelical rule will be ſtrictly obſerved, and men in all their dealings will do unto others, as they would that others ſhould do unto them. Even to-

wards the brute creation the juſtice of the divine government, when deeply impreſſed upon our minds, will powerfully and ſteadily influence our conduct. We ſhall regard them as nature's commoners, and thus holding a ſacred title to the common gifts of heaven. We ſhall treat them neither with caprice nor cruelty; we ſhall uſe without abuſing them; and we ſhall feed ſuch as have been domeſticated for our benefit with food convenient for them; remembering the injunction of God himſelf, *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.*

But GOODNESS is that attribute of the Deity, which particularly excites our love. All the order and harmony that we behold in the creation; all the felicity of the various ranks of beings in the univerſe; and all the benefits and privileges, which we ourſelves enjoy, are the gifts of his bounty. In the contemplation of ſuch extenſive beneficence, we ſympathize and exult with all animated nature; and our minds glow with devout gratitude, for our ample participation in ſuch diffuſive liberality. When the heart is in this ſacred frame, the apoſtolical prediction is fulfilled, and God in us, *is all in all.* Pride, envy, malice, and revenge cannot ſubſiſt under ſuch divine influences; and all the ſympathetic affections will expand and flouriſh in full

full vigour. It is a law of the human conſtitution that by meditating upon we love, and by loving, we aſſimilate excellence to our own nature. This may in ſome reſpects be true, even when applied to thoſe moral attributes of God, which are leaſt the objects of imitation. And when we view him, as a being without *variableneſs or ſhadow of turning*, the divine IMMUTABILITY prompts to ſteadineſs in our religious purpoſes, and to perſeverance in the practice of every duty. The SPIRITUALITY of God, in like manner, impels us to offer to him, not the incenſe of the lips, but of the heart; to devote our whole ſouls to him; and to worſhip the Father of ſpirits *in ſpirit and in truth.*

The limits preſcribed to a diſcourſe from the pulpit, will not permit me to expatiate on theſe inſtructive and ſacred topics; and I muſt ſatisfy myſelf with having thus briefly ſuggeſted them to your conſideration. I ſhall, therefore, proceed to the ſecond head, deduced from my text: viz.

That the complete ſpiritual dominion of God involves in it the perfection of all our perſonal endowments and virtues. *He that cometh to God muſt firſt believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* But faith implies knowledge, and the great ſources of knowledge are the works and the

the word of God. The ſtudy of theſe, therefore, is indiſpenſably connected with genuine piety. On every part of nature the character of the Deity is deeply inſcribed. If we look into ourſelves, it will be found, that we are fearfully and wonderfully made; and if we contemplate the world around us, we ſhall behold on all ſides the moſt ſtriking manifeſtations of wiſdom, power, and goodneſs. Every new diſcovery opens farther views; and the acquiſitions which we thus make to our ſtock of ſcience are unbounded, becauſe conſiſting of truths multiplied in their relations, and capable of abſtraction, diviſion, and compoſition to an indefinite extent. The links of this vaſt chain terminate in God; and he who is beſt qualified to trace them through all their dependencies will moſt devoutly adore that being, who is the cauſe of cauſes, *the firſt and the laſt, the Alpha and Omega* of the univerſe. The holy ſcriptures ſpeak the ſame language as the book of nature; and in terms, which, though they exalt our conceptions, are yet clear and intelligible to the humbleſt and leaſt cultivated minds. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work. Great and marvellous are thy ways, Lord God Almighty! Thou art worthy to receive*

glory,

glory, honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.

A rational faith in God is pious truſt and confidence in his divine providence; reſignation to his will; and fortitude in the performance of duty. He, who is omniſcient, muſt know what is the higheſt intereſt of his creatures; he, who is omnipotent, can be ſubject to no impediment or controul; and he, the eſſence of whoſe nature is goodneſs, muſt be ever diſpoſed to advance and perfect univerſal felicity. The apparent evils of life would entirely vaniſh, could we regard them, with full conviction, as the diſpenſations of our Father. But in this imperfect ſtate, we cannot diveſt ourſelves of human infirmity. Submiſſion, indeed, implies ſuffering; and antecedently to reſignation we muſt feel the chaſtening hand of God. Our bleſſed Saviour, under the proſpect of an agonizing death, prayed to his Father, to remove the cup from him; thus evincing a full ſenſe of its bitterneſs and woe. But he inſtantly and devoutly adds, *neverthelefs not my will, but thine be done.* Actuated by the like piety, in loſſes, ſickneſs, and pain, we ſhall be enabled to kiſs the rod, and ſupport ourſelves with patience, and even cheerfulneſs, under every tribulation.

But

But true piety implies active, as well as paſſive fortitude. Human life is a warfare; and we are called, by the providence of God, to trials and exertions, which involve in them difficulty, pain, and danger. Solicitous to obtain the favour, and confiding in the protection of our Maker, we are elevated above degrading fears, and magnanimous in every good work. Thus in the cauſe of our families, of our friends, of our country, and of mankind, we become diſpoſed, and even zealous to ſacrifice eaſe, fortune, and life itſelf. *For the eyes of the Lord are upon them that love him; he is their mighty protector and ſtrong ſtay. Look at the generations of old, and ſee, did ever any truſt in the Lord, and was confounded? Or whom did he ever deſpiſe that called upon him? Though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod, and thy ſtaff they comfort me.*

A mind fortified with ſuch holy reſolutions, and ſublime in its conceptions of God and of moral excellence, can be ſubject neither to impurity, intemperance, pride, nor covetouſneſs. Senſual indulgences are held in the loweſt eſtimation, where true dignity of character ſubſiſts. They are ſubordinate to all other enjoyments; and connect humanity with the brutes, and not with heaven. Pride is ſo oppoſite to the meekneſs of a devotional ſpirit,

ſpirit, aſpiring towards perfection, yet conſcious of imbecility and guilt, that they can never harmonize together. And avarice, in proportion as it prevails, excludes every other principle of action. It puts ſordid means for a noble end, purſues the ſhadow for the ſubſtance, and exalts mammon above God. Two ſuch maſters no man can ſerve; *for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other.*

I have thus endeavoured, with a brevity perhaps hardly juſtifiable on ſo momentous a ſubject, to illuſtrate, and to apply to our edification the prediction delivered in my text. THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL, in the true ſpiritual ſenſe of the apoſtle, is a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed. And it is our privilege and felicity as rational, moral, and immortal beings, that we are formed to participate in its accompliſhment. The world is a ſchool of inſtruction in wiſdom; and of diſcipline in virtue. And its buſineſs, cares, ſufferings, and even pleaſures, are leſſons of Divine Providence, which, if rightly improved, will enlarge our faculties, expand our affections, and train us to the love and imitation of our heavenly Preceptor, Judge, and Father. Let us ſtudy to impreſs this devout ſentiment on our hearts; and to make it our governing principle of action. It will at once animate and

and ſweeten life; will ſupport us under all its viciſſitudes; and bring us to the cloſe of it with ſerenity and holy joy; enabling us, at the ſolemn hour of diſſolution, to ſay with St. Paul; *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe; I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous judge ſhall give me at that day; and not to me only; but to all them alſo, who love his appearing. O death! where is thy ſting? O grave! where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin; and the ſtrength of ſin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye ſteadfaſt, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

THE END.

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